A COLLECTION OF *Miſcellanies*:

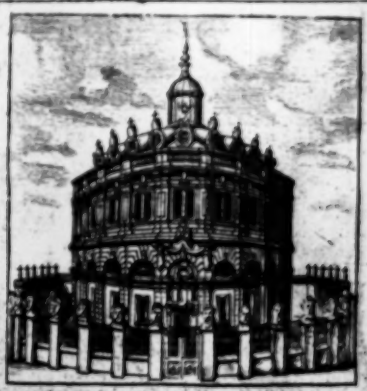
CONSISTING OF

POEMS, ESSAYS, DISCOURSES, *and* LETTERS,

OCCASIONALLY WRITTEN

By *John Norris* M. A. and Fellow of All-Souls College in *Oxford.*

..... *Diram qui contudit* Hydram,
Notaque Fatali *Portenta labore ſubegit,*
Comperit Invidiam *ſupremo fine domari.*
Hor. Epiſt. *Lib.* 2. *Epiſt.* 1.



OXFORD, Printed at the THEATER
For *John Croſley* Bookſeller, 1687.

IMPRIMATUR,

JOH. VENN

June 22.
1687.

Vice-Cancel. *Oxon.*

TO THE HONORABLE

LEOPOLD-WILLIAM FINCH

WARDEN

OF

All-Souls Colledge.

SIR,

THE greatneſs of your *Quality* and *Perſonal worth*, conſider'd with that *Happy Relation* which has further endear'd you to us, gives you ſo juſt a Title to theſe Performances, that I could not without an heinous *Alienation* devote them to any other Patron. And therefore, however my boldneſs may be tax'd for making you ſo *diſproportionable*

tionable a Preſent, yet certainly I ſhould have incurr'd more diſhonour by witholding a *Debt*, and Preſumption is a leſs Crime than Injuſtice.

Sir, 'tis by your kind Patronage and Protection (next to the favourable influences of a good Prince) that our Studies proſper, and our Laurels thrive and flouriſh, and that any of us are in a *capacity* to throw in the leaſt *Symbol* into the Muſes *Exchequer*. To whom then ſhould the Fruits of this Sacred ground be offer'd, but to that *Sun* by whoſe genial influence they *grow* and *ripen*?

To you therefore I humbly preſent this Collection of *Miſcellanies* for the entertainment of your

your leiſure hours, which were compoſed at ſome of *mine*. I ſhall not beg your *Protection* any farther than you ſhall find it worthy of it. I am only concern'd that you ſhould hence conclude how well your (now more than ever fortunate) Society ſtands affected towards you, particularly how much you are honour'd and eſteem'd by

Sir,

Your humble and moſt devoted
Servant

All-Souls Coll.
June 1. 1687.

John Norris.

TO THE READER.

OF *all the* tedious *things in the world I was ever the leaſt Friend to* long Prefaces, *and therefore I ſhall only commend to your hands this Collection of* Miſcellanies *occaſionally compoſed at ſeveral times, as my* Humour *and* Leaſure *ſerv'd me, with a brief account of my* Deſign *as to* both Parts *of the* Collection.

Not to trouble you with a Pompous *diſcourſe of the nature of* Poetry, *its Meaſures of Criticiſm, its Variety, Antiquity, its great uſe and excellence and the like, which have been at large ſet forth by many curious Pens, I have only leaſure at preſent to obſerve, that Poetry is of late mightily fall'n from the Beauty of its* Idea, *and from its ancient* Majeſty *and grandeur, as well as* Credit *and Reputation.*

It may appear ſtrange indeed that in ſuch a Refining *Age as this, wherein all things ſeem ready to receive their* laſt turn *and* finiſhing ſtroke, *Poetry ſhould be the only thing that remains unimprov'd. And yet ſo it happens, that which we generally have now adays is no more like the thing it was formerly, than* Modern Religion *is like* Primitive Chriſtianity.

'Tis with this as with our Muſic. *From grave, majeſtic, ſolemn ſtrains, where deep inſtructive ſenſe*

is

is ſweetly convey'd in charming numbers, where e-qual addreſs is made to the Judgment *and the* Imagination, *and where* Beauty *and* Strength *go hand in hand, 'tis now for the moſt part dwindled down to light, frothy ſtuff, conſiſting either of mad extravagant Rants, or ſlight* Witticiſms, *and little amorous* Conceits, *fit only for a* Tavern entertainment, *and that too among Readers of a* Dutch *palate.*

The truth is, this moſt excellent and Divine Art has of late been ſo cheapned *and depretiated by the* bungling *performances of ſome who thought themſelves* inſpired, *and whoſe* Readers *too have been more kind to them than their* Planets, *that* Poetry *is grown almoſt out of* Repute, *and men come ſtrongly prejudiced againſt any thing of this kind, as expecting nothing but* Froth *and* Emptineſs, *and to be a* Poet *goes for little more than a* Country Fidler.

But certainly he had once another Character, *and that in as* nice *and* wiſe *an Age as this. If we may believe the great* Horace *he was one*

——— Cui mens Divinior, atque Os
Magna locuturum ———————

He had then his Temples *ſurrounded with a* Divine glory, *ſpoke like the* Oracle *of the God of* wiſdom, *and could deſcribe no Hero greater than* himſelf. *Poetry was once the* Miſtreſs *of all the Arts in the* Circle, *that which held the* Rains *of the world in her hand, and which gave the* firſt, *and (if we may judge by the effects) perhaps the* beſt Inſtitutes *for the moralizing and governing the Paſſions of mankind.*

The

The Deſign therefore of the preſent undertaking is to reſtore the declining *genius of Poetry to its* Primitive *and* genuin *greatneſs, to wind up the* ſtrings *of the* Muſes Lyre, *and to ſhew that* ſenſe *and* gracefulneſs *are as conſiſtent in theſe as in any other Compoſitions. I deſign here all the* Maſculine ſenſe *and* Argument *of a* Diſſertation, *with the advantage of* Poetic Fineneſs, *Beauty and Spirit, and accordingly I have made choice for the moſt part of* Divine *and* Moral *Subjects, and if I meddle with any other ſort, I commonly turn the* ſtream *another way, as particularly in thoſe two* Poems *call'd* Beauty *and* Love, *which I have* reſcued *from thoſe ſordid abuſes they have hitherto ſuffer'd.*

I confeſs 'tis a difficult Province to make ſubſtantial maſſy *Senſe yield to the* ſoftneſſes of Poetry, *and accordingly we find there are few Poems after the* Divine *and* Moral *way but what are ſtiff, flat and inſipid; but without this* Mixture *Poetry is nothing worth, and when it has it, it has all it* can *have, and is withall ſo* Divine *a thing, that even* Plato *I fancy would give it entertainment in* his Common-wealth.

I need not make any other Apology *for my converſing with the* Muſes, *for I do not think it an employment beneath the Character of a* Scholar, *and tho I have now ſet up my* outmoſt Pillar, *yet I can't find in my heart to repent me of thoſe* few Blank hours *beſtow'd in this Exerciſe. For I have the example of ſome of the* greateſt *and* wiſeſt *in all Ages to warrant me, and the greatneſs of* Solomon

is

it ſeen as much in his Divine Paſtoral, *the* Canticles, *as in his* Proverbs *or* Sermons, *and the wiſe* Ben-Sirach *among other Characters of his* Heroes *puts in this among the reſt, that they were* ſuch as found out Muſical tunes, and recited Verſes in writing. *Eccl.* 44. 5.

And thus much for the Verſe-part. *Concerning the* Eſſays *and* Diſcourſes *I have only this to ſay, that I deſign'd in them as much* Brevity *and* Clearneſs *as are conſiſtent with each other, and to abound in* ſenſe *rather than* words. *I wiſh all men would obſerve this in their writings more than they do. I'm ſure the* multitude of Books *and the* ſhortneſs of Life *require it, and ſenſe will lye in a little compaſs if men would be perſwaded to vent no Notions but what they are* Maſters *of, and were* Angels *to write, I fancy we ſhould have but few* Folio's.

This is what I deſign'd *and* endeavour'd *in the* whole. *Whether I have* attain'd *it or no, I ſubmit to* Judgment.

All-Souls Coll.
June 1ſt. 1687.

J. Norris.

THE

THE CONTENTS OF THE PROSE-PART.

Of the advantages of Thinking. Page 145.
Of the Care and Improvement of Time. 153.
Of Solitude. 158.
Of Courage. 165.
Of Seriousness. 170.
Of the slightness of all Secular, and the importance of minding our Eternal, Interest. 175.
A Metaphysical Essay toward the Demonstration of a God, from the steddy and immutable Nature of Truth. 193.
The Christian Law Asserted and Vindicated: Or, a general Apology for the Christian Religion, both as to the Obligativeness, and Reasonableness of the Institution. 211.
A Discourse concerning Perseverance in Holiness. 249.
A Discourse concerning Heroic Piety, wherein its Notion is stated, and its Practise recommended. 275.
Contemplation and Love: Or, the Methodical Ascent of the Soul to God, by steps of Meditation. 295.
A Discourse upon Romans 12. 3. Not to think

think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; But to think ſoberly, according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith. 333.

Conſiderations upon the Nature of Sin, accommodated to the Ends both of Speculation and Practiſe. 361.

An Idea of Happineſs in a Letter to a Friend, Enquiring wherein the greateſt Happineſs attainable by man in this Life does conſiſt. 393.

A Letter of Reſolution concerning ſome Paſſages in the foregoing Treatiſe. 431.

Another Letter concerning the true Notion of Plato's *Ideas, and of* Platonic *Love.* 435.

A Letter concerning Love and Muſic. 446.

A Letter concerning Friendſhip. 450.

A Letter of Self-Conſolation occaſion'd by the Death of a Friend. 455.

ERRATA.

Page 164. for *ingeniouſly* read *ingenuouſly*. Page 170. for *gaiety* read *gait*. Page 281. for καύκημα read καύχημα.

The

The Passion of our B. Saviour represented in a Pindarique Ode.

Quis talia fando
Temperet à Lachrymis?

I.

SAY *bold Licentious* Muse,
What *Noble* Subject wilt thou chuse,
Of what great *Hero*, of what *mighty* thing,
Wilt thou in *boundless* numbers sing?
Sing the *unfathom'd* Depths of *Love*,
(For who the Wonders done by *Love* can tell,
By *Love*, which is it self *all Miracle*?)
Here in vast endless Circles may'st thou rove,
And like the travelling Planet of the day
In an Orb *unbounded* stray.
Sing the great Miracle of Love *Divine*,
Great be thy *Genius*, *sparkling* every Line.
Love's greatest *Mystery* rehersе,
Greater then that
Which on the seeming *Chaos* brooding sate,
And *hatch'd*, with kindly heat, the Universe.
How *God* in Mercy chose to *bleed*, and *dye*
To rescue *Man* from Misery,
Man, not his *Creature* only, but his *Enemy*.

II.

Lo, in *Gethsemane*, I see him prostrate lye,
Press'd with the *weight* of his great Agony.

The *common* Sluces of the Eyes
To vent his *mighty* Paſſion won't ſuffice,
His tortured Body weeps *all-o're*,
And out of every Pore
Buds forth a *pretious* Gem of Purple Gore.
How ſtrange the Power of afflictions rod
When in the Hand of an incenſed God!
Like the *commanding* Wand
In *Moſes* Hand
It works a Miracle, and turns the *Flood*
Of *Tears* into a *Sea* of *Blood*
See with what *Pomp* Sorrow does now appear!
How *proud* She is of being ſeated here!
She never wore
So *rich* a *Dye* before.
Long was he willing to decline
Th' *Encounter* of the Wrath Divine.
Thrice he ſent for his Releaſe
Pathetic Embaſſies of Peace,
At length his Courage overcame his Doubt,
Reſolv'd he was, and ſo the *bloody Flagg* hung out.

III.

And now the *Tragic Scene's* diſplai'd,
Where drawn in full *Battalia* are laid
Before his Eyes
That numerous *Hoſt* of Miſeries
He muſt withſtand, that *Map* of Woe
Which he muſt undergo.
That heavy *Wine-preſs* which muſt by him be *trod*,
The whole *Artillery* of God.
He ſaw that Face whoſe very Sight
Cheers Angels with its *Beatific* Light,

Contracted

Contracted now into a dreadful frown,
All *cloath'd* with Thunder, *big* with death
And Showers of hot burning Wrath,
Which ſhortly muſt be poured down.
He ſaw a black and diſmal Scroll
Of Sins paſt, preſent, and to come,
With their intolerable Doom
Which would the more oppreſs his *ſpotleſs* Soul;
As th' Elements are weighty proved
When from their *Native* Station they'r removed.
He ſaw the foul *Ingratitude* of thoſe
Who would the *Labours* of his Love oppoſe,
And reap no benefit by all his *Agonys*.
He ſaw all this,
And as he ſaw to *Waver* he began,
And almoſt to *repent* of his great Love for Man.

IV.

When lo, a heavenly Form all bright and fair,
Swifter then *Thought* ſhot through th' *enlight'ned* Air.
He who ſat next th' *imperial* Throne,
And read the Counſels of the Great *Three-One*,
Who in Eternity's *Miſterious Glaſs* [paſs;
Saw both what was, what is, and what muſt come to
He came with Reverence profound,
And rais'd his *proſtrate Maker* from the Ground;
Wiped off the bloody Sweat
With which his *Face* and *Garments* too were wet,
And comforted his dark *benighted* Mind
With ſovereign Cordials of *Light refin'd*.
This done, in ſoft addreſſes he began
To *fortifie* his kind Deſigns for Man,
Unſeal'd to him the Book of Gods Decrees
And ſhew'd him what *muſt* be,

Alledg'd the Truth of *Prophecies*,
Types, *Figures*, and *Myſteries*,
How needful it was to ſupply
With humane Race the *ruins* of the Skie.
How this would *new acceſſion* bring
To the *Cæleſtial Quire*,
And how withall it would inſpire
New Matter for the Praiſe of the great King.
How he ſhould ſee the *travail of his Soul*, and bleſs
Thoſe Sufferings which had ſo good Succeſs.
How great the *Triumphs* of his Victory,
How glorious his *Aſcent* would be,
What *weighty* Bliſs in Heaven he ſhould obtain
By a few Hours of Pain,
Where to *Eternal* Ages he ſhould Reign.
He ſpake, confirm'd in mind the *Champion* ſtood,
A Spirit divine
Through the thick *Veil* of Fleſh did ſhine,
All over *Powerful* he was, all over *Good*.
Pleas'd with his ſucceſsful Flight,
The *Officious* Angel poſts away
To the bright Regions of Eternal Day,
Departing in a *track* of *Light*.
In haſte for News the heavenly People ran,
And joy'd to hear the *hopeful* State of Man.

V.

And now that ſtrange prodigious hour,
When God muſt ſubject be to humane Power,
That Hour is come,
The *unerring Clock* of *Fate* has *ſtruck*,
'Twas heard below down to Hell's *loweſt* Room,
And ſtrait th' Infernal Powers th' *appointed ſignal* took.
Open the *Scene* my Muſe, and ſee
Wonders of Impudence and Villany;

How

How wicked *Mercenary* hands
Dare to *invade* him whom they ſhould *adore*,
With Swords and Staves incompaſs'd round he ſtands,
Who knew no other *Guards* but thoſe of Heaven be-
Once with his *powerful* breath he did repell [fore.
The rude aſſaults of Hell.
A ray of his *Divinity*.
Shot forth with that bold Anſwer, *I am He*,
They *reel* and *ſtagger*, and *fall* to the Ground,
For *God* was in the Sound.
The Voice of God was once again
Walking in the *Garden* heard.
And once again was by the *guilty* Hearers fear'd,
Trembling ſeiz'd every joynt, and chilneſs every Vein.
This *little* Victory he won.
Shew'd what he *could* have done.
But he to whom as *chief* was given
The whole *Militia* of Heaven,
That *Mighty* He
Declines all Guards for his defence
But that of his *inſeparable Innocence*;
And *quietly* gives up his Liberty.
He's ſeiz'd on by the *Military bands*,
With Cords they bind his *ſacred* hands,
But ah! how *weak*, what *nothings* would they prove,
Were he not held by *ſtronger* ones of *Love*.

VI.

Once more, my weary'd Muſe, thy Pinions try,
And *reach* the top of *Calvary*.
A *ſteep Aſcent*: But moſt to him who bore
The *Burthen* of a *Croſs* this way before.
(The Croſs *aſcends*, there's ſomething in it ſure
That *Moral* is and *myſtical*,
No *Heights* of Fortune are from thee ſecure,
Afflictions ſometimes *Climb*, as well as *fall*)

Here breath a while, and view
The dolefull ſt *Picture* Sorrow ever *drew*,
The *Lord of Life*, Heavens *darling* Son,
The Great, th' Almighty one,
With *out-ſtretch'd* Arms, nail'd to a *curſed* Tree,
Crown'd with ſharp Thorns, cover'd with Infamy;
He who before
So many *Miracles* had done,
The Lives of *others* to *reſtore*,
Does with a *greater*, *loſe* his *own*.
Full three long hours his *tender* body did ſuſtain
Moſt exquiſite and *poignant* pain.
So long the *Sympathizing* Sun his light *withdrew*,
And *w nder'd* how the *Stars* their *dying* Lord could *view*.

VII.

This ſtrange defect of light
Does all the *Sages* in *Aſtronomy* affright
With fears of an *Eternal* Night.
Th' *Intelligences* in their Courſes *ſtray*,
And *Travellers* below *miſtake* their way,
Wond ring to be *benighted* in the midſt of *Day*.
Each mind is ſeiz'd with *Horror* and *Deſpair*,
And more o *reſpread* with *darkneſs* than the *air*.
Fear on, tis *wondrous* all and *new*,
'Tis what paſt Ages never knew.
Fear on, but yet you'll find
The *great Eclipſe* is ſtill behind.
The *luſtre* of the face *Divine*
Does on the *Mighty Sufferer* no longer *ſhine*.
God hides his Glories from his ſight
With a thick *Skreen* made of Hell s *groſſeſt* night.
Cloſe-wrought it was, and *Solid* all,
Compacted and *Subſtantial*,
Impenetrable to the *Beatifick* light

With-

Without *Complaint* he bore
The tortures he endur'd *before*;
But *now* no longer able to *contain*
Under the great *Hyperbole* of pain,
He *mourns*, and with a ſtrong *Pathetick* cry,
Laments the ſad *Deſertion* of the *Diety*.
Here ſtop my Muſe, ſtop and admire,
The *Breather* of all Life does now *expire*;
His *Milder* Father Summons him away,
His Breath *obediently* he does reſign;
Angels to *Paradice* his Soul convey,
And *Calm* the *Relicts* of his grief with *Hymns* divine.

Annotations.

THis Ode is after the Pindaric way; which is the higheſt and moſt magnificent kind of writing in Verſe, and conſequently fit only for great and noble Subjects, ſuch as are as *boundleſs* as its *own Numbers*. The nature of which is to be looſe and free, and not to keep one ſettled pace, but ſometimes like a gentle ſtream to glide along peaceably within its own Channel, and ſometimes, like an impetuous Torrent, to *roul* on extravagantly, and carry all before it. Agreeable to that deſcription of *Horace:*

Nunc pace delabentis Hetruſcum
In mare, nunc lapides adeſos
Stirpeſque raptas & pecus & domos
Volventis una non ſine montium,
Clamore vicinæque Sylvæ.

And this may ſerve to explain the Introduction of the Poem:

And hatch'd with kindly heat the Univerſe.

Love in the *Gentile Theology*, is made the moſt ancient of the Gods, and the Sire of all things. ἵνα πάντα δι' ἐκεῖνον μετάσχῃ γενέσεως, ſays *Plutarch.*

And

And it is deſcribed by *Simmias Rhodius*, in a pair of Wings, which ſuited well with the *Symbolical* repreſentation of the *Chaos* by an Egg, which was brooded and hatch'd under theſe Wings of Love. This whole matter is rarely well, and at large expreſs'd by *Ariſtophanes* in *Avibus*. The plain and *undiſguiſed* meaning of it is this, That the Creation of the World was the effect of the Divine Love, God having no other end in it beſides the *Communication* of his own *Happineſs*.

As th' Elements are weighty proved,
When from their Native Station they're removed.

This is according to the *Ariſtotelean Hypotheſis*, that the Elements are not heavy in their own places, which whether it be true or no, I ſhall not now diſpute. However, it ſerves for an *Illuſtration*, which is ſufficient for my preſent purpoſe.

He ſaw the foul Ingratitude of thoſe, &c.

The bitter Ingredients of our Lord's Cup mention'd hitherto, were taken from things relating to his own *perſonal* concern. But this laſt motive of his Sorrow proceeds wholly on the behalf of *others*, of whoſe final Impenitence he is ſuppos'd to have a foreſight. This I take to be a good and proper inſinuation of the excellency of our Bleſſed Lord's temper, his exceeding great Love and *Philanthropy*, when among

among the other Ingredients of his Paſſion this is ſuppoſed to be one, that there would be ſome, who, by their own default, would receive no benefit from it.

Unſeal'd to him the Book of God's decree, &c.

Whether the Angel uſed theſe *topicks* of Conſolation or no, is a thing as indifferent to my purpoſe, as 'tis *uncertain*. In the Scripture it is only ſaid in general, that *there appear'd an Angel from Heaven ſtrengthning him*. However, theſe Arguments are ſuch as are probable and pertinent, and that's ſufficient.

In haſte for news the heavenly people ran,
And joy'd to hear the hopeful ſtate of man.

It is highly reaſonable to believe that thoſe bleſſed and excellent Spirits, who out of their compaſſionate love and concern for mankind, uſher'd in the news of our Saviour's Nativity with *Anthems* of *Praiſe* and *Thankſgiving*; and are ſaid likewiſe to *rejoice* at the Converſion of a Sinner, were alſo mightily tranſported with joy, when they underſtood that our Saviour, notwithſtanding the *reluctancy* of *innocent* Nature, was at length fully reſolv'd to undertake the *Price* of our Redemption.

Full three long hours his Tender Body did ſuſtain
Moſt exquiſite and poignant pain.

It is ſuppoſed by the Ancient Fathers, that the Suffer-

Sufferings which our B. Saviour underwent in his Body, were more afflictive to him than the ſame would have been to another man, upon the account of the excellency and quickneſs of his ſenſe of feeling: And this opinion I take to be as *reaſonable*, as 'tis *pious*. For ſince, according to the Principles of Philoſophy, the ſenſe of feeling ariſes from the proportion of the firſt Qualities, it follows, that the better the complexion or temperament of any man is, the better his Feeling muſt needs be. Now 'tis very reaſonable to believe, that that man who was to be ſubſtantially united to the *God-head*, and who was begotten by the miraculous *overſhadowings* of the holy Spirit, ſhould have a Body endow'd with the beſt Complexion, and moſt noble *Harmony* of Qualities that could be, that ſo it might be a ſuitable Organ for his excellent Soul. And if ſo, then it follows that the fleſh of our Lord's Body was ſo ſoft and tender, and his feeling ſo exquiſitely quick and ſenſible, as never any man's was before: And conſequently the ſevere uſages which he underwent, not only at his *Paſſion*, but throughout his *whole* Life, muſt needs be in a *Singular* manner afflictive to him. And hence appears the vanity of their opinion, who are little or nothing affected with the conſideration of our Lords Paſſion, becauſe they think it was made light to him, by reaſon of his union with the *God-head*. 'Twas eaſie for him (ſome incon-

inconſiderate Perſons are ready to ſay) to ſuffer this or this, for he was God, and not meer man, as we are. True, he was ſo, but his being God did no way leſſen the puniſhment he underwent as *man*, but only ſupported him in his *exiſtence* under it, in the ſame manner as God is ſuppoſed, by an act of his Almighty Power, to preſerve the bodies of the *Damn'd*, *incorruptible* among the *everlaſting burnings*. But this I think is no *kindneſs* to them. Neither did the Society of the Divine Nature any more diminiſh the Sufferings of our deareſt Lord; nay, in one reſpect it proved an *accidental aggravation* to them, becauſe upon the account of this Noble Union he had given him a Body of a moſt admirable Complexion and Harmonious Temperature, and conſequently of a Fleſh exceeding tender, and moſt exquiſitely perceptive of the leaſt impreſſions.

So long the Sympathizing Sun his light withdrew,
And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord
could view.

The *Eclipſe* which accompany'd the Paſſion of our Saviour was ſo remarkable and miraculous, that 'twas taken notice of by many of the *Gentile* Hiſtorians. There are three things which made this Eclipſe ſo very remarkable, the time of its *Appearance*, the time of its *Duration*, and the *Degree* of it. 1. For the time of its Appearance, it was at

full

full Moon, when the Moon was not in *Conjunction* with, but in oppoſition to the Sun. And this appears not only from the teſtimony of *Dionyſius*, who affirms that he ſaw it at that time, but alſo from the time of our Lord's *Paſſion*, which, according to the relation of the *Evangeliſt*, was at the Celebration of the *Paſſeover*. Now the *Jews* were bound to celebrate the *Paſchal* Solemnity always at full Moon, as is to be ſeen in the twelfth of *Exodus*. This was no time therefore for a *Natural* Eclipſe, becauſe 'twas impoſſible that the Moon ſhould then interpoſe betwixt us and the Sun. 2. For the time of its *Duration*, it was full three hours, which is another evidence that this was no *Natural* Eclipſe: For the *Natural* Eclipſe of the Sun can never laſt ſo long, both becauſe of the great diſproportion between the Suns Magnitude, and that of the Moon, and becauſe of the ſwift motion of the *latter*. 3. For the *degree* of it, it was a *total* Eclipſe. The Sun was ſo darkned, that (as Hiſtorians report, who write of that Eclipſe) the *Stars* appear'd. And this is another Argument that it was no *Natural Phænomenon*, it being impoſſible that the Body of the Moon, which is ſo infinitely leſs than that of the Sun, ſhould *totally* eclipſe it. Now all theſe three Remarkables are comprized in the compaſs of theſe two Verſes. For in that it is ſaid that the *Sun withdrew his light*, it is intimated that the light of the Sun was not *intercepted*

tercepted by the ordinary *conjunction* of the Moon, but that by an Extraordinary *Commiſſion* from the God of Nature, the Sun *rein'd* in his light, and *ſuſpended* the emiſſion of his Beams. And this denotes the time of its *appearance*, *(viz.)* when the Moon was not in *Conjunction*. The time of its *duration* is implied by the words, *So long*. And laſtly, the *Degree* of it is implied in the laſt Verſe,

And wonder'd how the Stars their dying Lord could view.

Where the appearance of the Stars is not *directly* expreſs'd, but only *inſinuated* and *couch'd*, for the more elegancy of the thought.

And calm the Reliſts of his grief with Hymns divine.

It is here ſuppoſed that the Paſſion of our Saviour was now over, and his Father's wrath wholly appeas'd. For I can by no means approve the opinion of thoſe who fancy that our Saviour, in the interim betwixt his Death and Reſurrection, deſcended *locally* into Hell, there to ſuffer the torments of the damn'd. His own words upon the Croſs, *It is finiſh'd*; His promiſe to the penitent Thief, that he ſhould be with him that day in *Paradice*, and his laſt *reſignation* of his Spirit into the hands of his Father, do all of them apparently contradict it. But yet, though the *bitter Cup* was wholly drank

drank off upon the Croſs, 'tis natural to imagine ſome little *reliſh* of it to remain behind for a time. Though all his ſufferings and *penal* inflictions were ended before his death, yet, I ſuppoſe (and I think very naturally) ſome little *diſcompoſures* of mind, remaining like the *after-droppings* of a ſhower, which his Soul could not immediately ſhake off, upon her releaſe from the Body. In alluſion to that of *Virgil*,

Inter quas Phœniſſa recens a vulnere Dido
Errabat Sylva in Magna ----

Where the Poet fancies the Ghoſt of *Dido* being newly releas'd from the pains of Love, could not preſently forget her *ſhady* walks and *melancholy* retirements. Now theſe *Remains* of Sorrow and *after-diſturbances* of mind which cleav'd to the Soul of the *Holy Jeſus*, I ſuppoſe here to be allay'd by the *Muſick* of Angels in his *paſſage* to *Paradice*.

An Hymn upon the Transfiguration.

I.

HAil *King of Glory*, clad in Robes of Light,
Out-ſhining all we here call bright:
Hail Light's divineſt *Galaxy*,
Hail *Expreſs Image* of the *Deity*.
Could now thy *Amorous Spouſe* thy Beauties view,
How would her wounds all bleed anew!
Lovely thou art all o're and bright,
Thou *Iſrael's Glory*, and thou *Gentile's Light*.

II.

But whence this brightneſs, whence this ſuddain day?
Who did thee thus with light array?
Did thy *Divinity* diſpence
T' its *Conſort* a more *liberal* influence?
Or did ſome Curious Angel's *Chymick* Art
The *Spirits* of pureſt light impart,
Drawn from the *Native Spring* of day,
And wrought into an *Organized* ray?

III.

Howe're twas done, 'tis Glorious and Divine,
Thou doſt with *radiant wonders* ſhine.
The Sun with his bright Company,
Are all *groſs Meteors* if compar'd to thee.
Thou art the fountain whence their Light does flow,
But to thy *will* thine *own* doſt owe.
For (as at firſt) thou didſt but ſay,
Let there be light, and ſtrait ſprang forth this wondrous day.

IV. Let

IV.

Let now the *Eaſtern Princes* come and bring
Their *Tributary* Offering.
There needs no *Star* to guide their flight,
They'll find thee now, *great King*, by thine *own* light.
And thou, my Soul, adore, love, and admire,
And *follow* this *bright Guide* of *Fire*.
Do thou thy *Hymns* and *Praiſes* bring,
Whil'ſt Angels with *Veil'd Faces*, Anthems ſing.

The Parting.

I.

DEpart! The Sentence of the *Damn'd* I hear;
Compendious grief, and *black* deſpair.
I now believe the *Schools* with eaſe,
(Tho once an *happy Infidel*)
That ſhould the *ſenſe* no torment ſeize,
Yet *Pain* of *Loſs* alone would make a *Hell*.

II.

Take all, ſince me of this you Gods deprive,
'Tis hardly now worth while to live.
Nought in *exchange* can grateful prove,
No *Second* Friendſhip can be found
To match my mourning *Widow'd* Love;
Eden is loſt, the reſt's but *common* ground.

III.

Why are the *greateſt Bleſſings* ſent in vain,
Which muſt be loſt with *greater pain*?

Or why do we fondly admire
The greateſt good which *life* can boaſt?
When Fate will have the *Bliſs expire*,
Like *Life*, with painful *Agonies* 'tis loſt.

IV.

How fading are the Joves we dote upon,
Like *Apparitions ſeen* and *gone*:
But thoſe which ſooneſt take their flight,
Are the moſt *exquiſite* and *ſtrong*.
Like *Angels* viſits, *short* and *bright*;
Mortality's too *weak* to bear them *long*.

V.

No pleaſure certainly is ſo divine
As when two Souls in Love combine:
He has the *ſubſtance* of all bliſs,
To whom a Vertuous *Friend* is given,
So ſweet harmonious Friendſhip is,
Add but *Eternity*, you'll make it *Heaven*.

VI.

The *Minutes* in your converſation ſpent
Were *Feſtivals* of true content.
Here, here, an *Ark* of pleaſing *reſt*,
My Soul had found that *reſtleſs Dove*,
My *preſent* State methought was *beſt*,
I envy'd none *below*, ſcarce thoſe *above*.

VII.

But now the better part of me is gone,
My Sun is *ſet*, my Turtle *flown*.
Tho here and there of *leſſer* bliſs
Some *twinkling* Stars give *feeble* light,
Still there a mournful *darkneſs* is,
They ſhine but juſt enough to ſhew 'tis *night*.

VIII.

Fatal divorce! What have I done amiſs,
To bear ſuch miſery as this?
The World yields now no real good,
All happineſs is now become
But *painted* and *deluding* food:
As meer a *Fiction* as *Elyſium.*

IX.

Well then, ſince nothing elſe can pleaſe my taſte,
I'll *ruminate* on pleaſures *paſt.*
So when with glorious Viſions bleſt,
The waking *Hermit* finds no theme
That's grateful to his thoughtful breaſt,
He ſweetly *recollects* his pleaſing *Dream.*

To a Lady, who asked him, What Life was?

'TIs not becauſe I *breathe* and *eat,*
'Tis not becauſe a vigorous heat
Drives *round* my Blood, and does impart
Motion to my Pulſe and Heart:
'Tis not ſuch proofs as theſe can give
Any aſſurance that I *Live.*
No, no, to *Live* is to *enjoy*;
What marrs our *bliſs* does *Life* deſtroy:
The days which paſs without *Content,*
Are not *liv'd* properly, but *ſpent.*
Who ſays the Damn'd in Hell do *Live*?
That word we to the *Bleſſed* give:

The *Sum* of all whoſe happineſs
We by the name of *Life* expreſs.
Well then, if this account be true,
To *Live* is ſtill to Live with *You*.

The third Chapter of Job *Paraphraſed.*

I.

CUrs'd, ever curs'd be that unhappy day,
When firſt the Suns unwelcome ray
I ſaw with *trembling* eyes, being newly come
From the *dark* Priſon of the *womb*.
When firſt to me my vital breath was lent,
That breath which now muſt *all* in *ſighs* be ſpent.

II.

Let not the Sun his chearing Beams diſplay
Upon that *wretched*, *wretched* day;
But mourn in *Sables*, and all over ſhroud
His glories in a *ſullen* cloud.
Let light to *upper* Regions be confin'd,
And all *below* as black as is my *mind*.

III.

Curs'd be the night which firſt began to lay
The *ground work* of this houſe of Clay:
Let it not have the honour to appear
In the *Retinue* of the year.
Let all the days ſhun its ſociety,
Hate, *curſe*, *abandon* it as much as *I*.

IV. Let

IV.

Let *Melancholy* call that Night her *own*,
Then let her ſigh, then let her groan:
A general grief throughout all Nature ſpread,
With folded arms, and drooping head.
All Harps be ſtill, or tun'd to *ſuch* a ſtrain
As *Fiends* might hear, and yet not *eaſe* their *pain*.

V.

Let neither Moon nor Stars, with *borrow'd* light,
Checquer the blackneſs of that Night:
But let a pure *unqueſtion'd* darkneſs rear
Her *Sooty* Wings all o're the Air;
Such as once on th' *Abyſs* of *Chaos* lay,
Not to be *pierc'd* by *Stars*, ſcarce by the *edge* of *Day*.

VI.

Why was there then, ah, why a paſſage free
At once for *life* and *miſery*?
Why did I not *uncloiſter'd* from the Womb
Take my *next lodging* in a Tomb?
Why with ſuch *cruel* tenderneſs and care
Was I *nurs'd* up to Sorrow and Deſpair?

VII.

For now in ſweet repoſe might I have lain
Secure from any grief or pain:
Untouch'd with care, my Bed I ſhould have made
In Death's cool and refreſhing *ſhade*.
I ſhould have ſlept now in a happy place,
All calm and ſilent as the *Empty ſpace*.

VIII.

There where great *Emperours* their heads lay down,
Tir'd with the *burthen* of a Crown,

There where the Mighty, Popular and Great,
Are happy in a *dear* retreat;
Enjoy that *ſolid* Peace which here in vain
In *Grotts* and *shady walks* they ſought t' obtain.

IX.

None of Hells Agents can or dare moleſt
This *awful Sanctuary* of reſt.
No Priſoners ſighs, no groanings of the Slave,
Diſturb the *quiet* of the *Grave*.
From toil and labour here they ever ceaſe,
And keep a *Sabbath* of ſweet *reſt* and *peace*.

X.

Why then does *Heaven* on Mortals Life beſtow
When 'tis thus *overtax'd* with woe?
Why am I forc'd to live againſt my will,
When all the *good* is *loſt* in *ill*?
My ſighs flow thick, my groans ſound from afar,
Like *falling waters* to the *traveller*.

Seraphic Love.

I.

'TIs true, *Frail Beauty*, I did once reſign
To thy *imperious* Charms this Heart of mine:
There didſt thou *undiſturb'd* thy Scepter ſway,
And I methought was *pleas'd* t' obey.
Thou ſeem'ſt ſo lovely, ſo divine,
With ſuch ſweet Graces didſt thou ſhine,
Thou entertain'ſt my *Amorous* ſenſe
With ſuch *Harmonious* excellence,

That,

That, Credulous and Silly I,
With *vain*, with *impious* Idolatry,
Ador'd that *Star* which was to lead me to the *Deity*.

II.

But now, thou ſoft *Enchantreſs* of the mind,
Farewel, a change, a mighty change I find;
The Empire of my Heart thou muſt reſign,
For I can be no longer *thine*.
A Nobler, a Diviner Gueſt,
Has took poſſeſſion of my Breaſt,
He has, and muſt *engroſs* it all,
And yet the room is ſtill too *ſmall*.
In vain you tempt my Heart to rove,
A fairer object now my Soul does move,
It muſt be all *Devotion*, what before was *Love*.

III.

Through *Contemplation's Optics* I have ſeen
Him who is *Fairer than the Sons of men*:
The *Source* of good, the light *Archetypall*,
Beauty in the *Original*.
The faireſt of ten thouſand, He,
Proportion all and Harmony.
All *Mortal Beauty's* but a ray
Of his bright ever-ſhining day;
A little *feeble twinkling* Star,
Which now the *Sun's* in place muſt *diſappear*;
There is but *One* that's *Good*, there is but *One* that's *Fair*.

IV.

To thee, thou *only Fair*, my Soul aſpires
With *Holy Breathings*, *languiſhing* deſires.
To thee m' *inamour'd*, *panting* Heart does move
By *Efforts* of *Ecſtatic* Love.

How do thy glorious *Streams* of Light
Refresh my *intellectual* sight!
Tho *broken*, and *strain'd* through a Skreen
Of *envious* Flesh that stands between!
When shall m' *imprison'd* Soul be free,
That she thy *Native uncorrected* Light may see,
And *gaze* upon thy *Beatific* Face to all *Eternity*?

I

The Retirement.

I.

WEll, I have thought on't, and I find
This *busie World* is Non-sense all,
I here despair to please my mind,
Her sweetest *Honey* is so mix'd with *Gall*.
Come then, I'll try how 'tis to be *alone*,
Live to my self a while, and be my *own*.

II.

I've try'd, and bless the *happy* change;
So happy, I could almost vow
Never from this *Retreat* to range,
For sure I ne'r can be so blest as now.
From all th' *allays* of bliss I here am free,
I *pitty others*, and none *envy me*.

III.

Here in this shady lonely Grove
I *sweetly think* my hours away,
Neither with *Business* vex'd, nor *Love*,
Which in the *World* bear such *Tyrannic* sway:
No Tumults can my *close Apartment find*, (Wind.
Calm as those *Seats above*, which know no Storm nor

IV. Let

IV.

Let *Plots* and *News* embroil the State,
Pray what's that to my *Books* and *Me*?
Whatever be the *Kingdom*'s Fate,
Here I am ſure t' *enjoy* a *Monarchy*.
Lord of my ſelf, accountable to none,
Like the firſt Man in *Paradice*, alone.

V.

While the *Ambitious vainly* ſue,
And of the *partial* Stars complain,
I ſtand upon the *Shore* and view
The mighty *Labours* of the diſtant *Main*.
I'm fluſh'd with *ſilent* joy, and ſmile to ſee
The Shafts of Fortune ſtill drop *ſhort* of *me*.

VI.

Th' *uneaſie Pageantry* of State,
And all the *plagues* to *Thought* and *Senſe*
Are far remov'd; I'm plac'd by Fate
Out of the *Road* of all *Impertinence*.
Thus, tho my *fleeting* Life runs *ſwiftly* on,
'Twill not be *ſhort*, becauſe 'tis *all* my *own*.

The Infidel.

I.

FArewel *Fruition*, thou grand *Cruel* Cheat,
Which firſt our hopes doſt *raiſe* and then *defeat*.
Farewel thou *Midwife* to *Abortive* Bliſs,
Thou *Myſtery* of fallacies.
Diſtance preſents the Object fair,
With Charming features and a graceful air,
But when we come to *ſeize* th' inviting prey,
Like a *Shy Ghoſt*, it vaniſhes away.

II.

So to th' *unthinking* Boy the diſtant Sky
Seems on ſome Mountain's Surface to relie;
He with *ambitious* haſte climbs the aſcent,
Curious to touch the *Firmament*:
But when with an unweari'd pace
Arriv'd he is at the *long-wish'd-for* place,
With Sighs the ſad defeat he does deplore,
His *Heaven* is *ſtill* as *diſtant* as *before*.

III.

And yet 'twas long e're I could *throughly* ſee
This grand Impoſtor's *frequent* Treachery.
Tho often Fool'd, yet I ſhould ſtill dream on
Of Pleaſure in *Reverſion*.
Tho ſtill he did my hopes *deceive*,
His fair Pretenſions I would ſtill *believe*.
Such was my *Charity*, that tho I knew
And found him *falſe*, yet I would think him *true*,

IV. But

IV.

But now he ſhall no more with *ſhews* deceive,
I will no more *enjoy*, no more *believe*.
Th' *unwary Jugler* has ſo often ſhewn
His *Fallacies*, that now they'r known,
Shall I *truſt* on? the Cheat is plain,
I *will* not be *impos'd* upon *again*.
I'll view the *Bright appearance* from *afar*,
But never try to *catch* the falling Star.

On a Muſician, ſuppoſed to be mad with Muſick.

I.

POOR *dull* miſtake of *law* Mortality,
To call that *Madneſs*, which is *Ecſtacy*.
'Tis no diſorder of the Brain,
His Soul is only *ſet* t' an *higher ſtrain*.
Out-ſoar he does the Sphere of *Common* ſenſe,
Rais'd to Diviner Excellence;
But when at higheſt pitch, his Soul out-flies
Not *Reaſon's Bounds*, but thoſe of *vulgar* Eyes.

II.

So when the *Myſtic Sibyl's* Sacred Breaſt
Was with *Divine Infuſions* poſſeſt,
'Twas *Rage* and *Madneſs* thought to be,
Which was all *Oracle* and *Myſtery*.
And ſo the Soul that's ſhortly to *Commence*
A Spirit *free* from dregs of Senſe,
Is thought to *rave*, when She diſcourſes high,
And *breathes* the *loſty ſtrains* of *Immortality*.

III. Muſic,

III.

Muſic, thou *Generous Ferment* of the Soul,
Thou univerſal *Cement* of the *whole*,
Thou *Spring* of Paſſion, that doſt inſpire
Religious Ardours, and *Poetic Fire*,
Who'd think that *Madneſs* ſhould b' aſcrib'd to thee
That *mighty Diſcord* to thy *Harmony*?
But 'twas *ſuch ignorance* that call'd the Gift Divine
Of *various Tongues*, *Rage*, and th' *effects* of *Wine*.

IV.

But thou, *Seraphic* Soul, do thou advance
In thy ſweet *Ecſtacy*, thy *pleaſing* Trance:
Let thy brisk paſſions mount ſtill higher,
Till they joyn to the *Element* of *Fire*.
Soar higher yet, till thou ſhalt *calmly* hear
The Muſic of a well-tun'd Sphere: (know
Then on the *lumpiſh maſs* look down, and thou ſhalt
The *Madneſs* of the *World*, for groveling ſtill below.

The Conſolation.

I.

I Grant 'tis bad, but there is ſome relief
In the *Society* of Grief.
'Tis ſweet to him that *mourns* to ſee
A *whole* houſe clad in Sorrow's *Livery*.
Grief in *Communion* does *remiſs* appear,
Like *harsher* ſounds in *Conſort*, which *leſs* grate the Ear.

II.

Men would not Curſe the Stars, did they diſpence
In *common* their ill Influence.

Let

Let none be *rich*, and Poverty
Would not be thought ſo great a Miſery.
Our diſcontent is from *compariſon*;
Were better ſtates *unſeen*, each man would like his *own*.

III.

Should *partial* Seas *wreck* my poor Ship *alone*,
I might with cauſe my Fate bemoan.
But ſince before I *ſink*, I ſee
A *Numerous Fleet* of Ships deſcend with me,
Why don't I with *content* my breath reſign?
I will, and in the *greater* ruine *bury* mine.

The Choice.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulæ culmine lubrico, &c.
Seneca Thyeſt. Act. 2.

I.

NO, I ſhan't envy him whoe're he be
That ſtands upon the *Battlements* of State,
Stand there who will for me,
I'd rather be *ſecure* than *great*.
Of being ſo *high* the *pleaſure* is but *ſmall*,
But *long the Ruine* if I chance to *fall*.

II.

Let me in ſome ſweet ſhade *ſerenely lye*,
Happy in *leiſure* and *obſcurity*;
Whilſt others place their joys
In *popularity* and *noiſe*.
Let my ſoft minutes *glide obſcurely* on
Like *ſubterraneous* ſtreams, *unheard*, *unknown*.

III. Thus

III.

Thus when my days are all in *silence* past,
A good *plain Country-man* I'll dye at last.
Death cannot chuse but be
To him a *mighty* misery,
Who to the World was *popularly* known,
And dies a *Stranger* to *himself alone.*

The Meditation.

I.

IT must be done (my Soul) but 'tis a strange,
A dismal and *Mysterious* Change,
When thou shalt leave this *Tenement* of Clay,
And to an *unknown somewhere* Wing away;
When *Time* shall be *Eternity*, and thou (not *how.*
Shalt *be* thou know'st not *What*, and *live* thou know'st

II.

Amazing State! no wonder that we dread
To *think* of *Death*, or *view* the *Dead.*
Thou'rt all wrapt up in Clouds, as if to thee
Our very *Knowledge* had *Antipathy.*
Death could not a more *Sad* Retinue find,
Sickness and *Pain before*, and *Darkness* all *behind.*

III.

Some Courteous Ghost, tell this *great Secrecy*,
What 'tis you *are*, and we *must* be.
You warn us of *approaching* Death, and why
May we not know from you what 'tis to *Dye?*
But you, having *shot* the Gulph, delight to see
Succeeding Souls *plunge* in with *like uncertainty.*

IV. When

IV.

When Life's cloſe Knot by *Writ* from Deſtiny,
Diſeaſe ſhall cut, or *Age unty*;
When after ſome *Delays*, ſome *dying* Strife,
The Soul ſtands *ſhivering* on the *Ridge* of Life;
With what a *dreadful Curioſity*
Does ſhe *launch* out into the Sea of vaſt *Eternity*.

V.

So when the Spatious Globe was delug'd o're,
And *lower holds* could ſave no more,
On th' *utmoſt* Bough th' aſtoniſh'd Sinners ſtood,
And view'd th' *advances* of th' *encroaching* Flood.
O're-topp'd at length by th' Element's encreaſe,
With *horrour* they reſign'd to the *untry'd Abyſs*.

The Irreconcilable.

I.

I Little thought (*my Damon*) once, that *you*
Could prove, and what is more, to *me*, *untrue*.
Can I *forget* ſuch *Treachery*, and *Live*?
Mercy it ſelf would not this Crime forgive.
Heaven's Gates refuſe to let *Apoſtates* in,
No, that's the *Great unpardonable Sin*.

II.

Did you not vow by all the Powers above,
That you could none but *dear Orinda* love?
Did you not ſwear by all that is Divine,
That you would *only* be and *ever* mine?
You did, and yet you live *ſecurely* too,
And think that *Heaven*'s *falſe* as well as *you*.

III. Be-

III.

Believe me, *Love*'s a thing *much* too *divine*
Thus to be *Ape'd*, and made a mere *deſign*.
'Tis no leſs Crime than *Treaſon here* to *feign*,
'Tis Counterfeiting of a *Royal Coin*.
But ah! *Hypocriſy*'s no where ſo common grown
As in *Moſt Sacred* things, *Love* and *Religion*.

IV.

Go ſeek *new Conqueſts*, go, you have my leave,
You ſhall not *Grieve* her whom you could *deceive*.
I don't *lament*, but *pitty* what you do,
Nor take that Love as *loſt*, which ne'r was *true*.
The way that's left you to *befriend* my Fate,
Is now to prove *more conſtant* in your *Hate*.

The

The Advice.

Prudens futuri temporis exitum
Caliginoſa nocte premit Deus. Hor.

I.

WHat's *forming* in the *Womb* of fate
Why art thou ſo *Conce n'd* to know?
Doſt think 'twou'd be *advantage* to thy ſtate?
But *Wiſer* Heaven does not think it ſo.
With thy *Content* thou would'ſt this Knowledge *buy*,
No part of life thou'dſt pleaſant find
For dread of what thou ſee'ſt behind,
Tho would'ſt but *taſt* of the *inlightning* fruit and *Dye*.

II.

Well then has Heaven events to Come
Hid with the *blackeſt* Veil of night;
But ſtill in vain if we *foreſtall* our doom
And with *Prophetic* fears our ſelves affright,
Grand folly! whether thus 'twill be or no
We Know not, and yet ſilly Man
Secures his evills what he can, (Blow.
And *ſtabbs* himſelf with Grief, leſt Fate ſhould *miſs* the

III.

Be wiſe, and let it be thy Care
To manage well the *preſent* hour,
Call home thy ranging thoughts and fix them *here*,
This only mind, this only's in thy *power*.
The reſt no ſettled, Steddy courſe maintain,
Like Rivers, which now gently ſlide
Within their bounds, now with full Tide
O'reflow, whom houſes, cattle, trees reſiſt in vain.

IV.

'Tis He that's happy, He alone
Lives free and pleaſant that can ſay
With every period of the ſetting Sun,
I've *lived*, and run my race like *him* to day.
To Morrow let the angry Heavens frown,
Or Smile with influence more kind,
On *Chance* depends what's yet *behind*,
But ſure what I have ſeiz'd *already* 's all my *own*.

V.

Fortune who no diverſion knows
Like *diſappointment*, laughs to ſee
How *Variouſly* ſhe can her gifts *Tranſpoſe*,
Sometimes to one, ſometimes t' another free.
Be ſure t' *enjoy* her while ſhe's pleas'd to *ſtay*.
But if for *flight* ſhe does prepare,
Don't you at parting drop a tear,
But hold your *Vertue* faſt, for that alone you *may*.

To himſelf.

I.

NOt yet Convinc'd? why wilt thou ſtill purſue
Through natures field *deluſive* Bliſs?
'Tis falſe, or elſe too *fugitive* if *true*,
Thou may'ſt aſſoon thy *Shadow* overtake as *this*.
The gaudy Light ſtill dances in thy eye,
Thou hot and eager in the *Chaſe*
Art drawn through many a thorny rugged place,
Still languiſhing and ſighing, but can'ſt ne're come *nigh*.

II.

Give o're my Soul, give o're, nor ſtrive again
This treacherous *Chymic gold* to find.
Tell me, why ſhould'ſt thou *fancy* there remain
Days yet to *come* more ſweet, than thoſe thou'ſt left *behind.*
A *wiſer Chymiſt* far then thou, t' obtain
This Jewell all his treaſures ſpent,
But yet he fail'd in's *grand Experiment*,
And all he gain'd was this, to *know* that *all* was *vain.*

III.

Forbear, and at *another*'s Coſt be wiſe,
Nor longer this *Coy* Miſtreſs *woo.*
He's mad that runs where *none* can win the prize,
Why ſhould'ſt thou loſe thy *Miſtreſs* and thy *labour* too?
Heaven does but ſport with our *Simplicity*
By laying Jewells in our way,
For when we ſtoop to ſeize the *glittering* prey,
They'r ſnatch't away again, and *baulk* our greedy eye.

IV.

'Tis ſo, the Choiceſt good this world can give
Will never *ſtand* Fruition's *Teſt.*
This all by experience *find*, yet few *believe*,
And in the midſt of *Cheats* hope they ſhall once be *bleſt.*
Strange *Magic* this. So Witches tho they find
No Comfort from their *airy* meat,
Forget at next Cabal their *ſlender* treat,
And greedily again fall to their *feaſt* of *Wind.*

V.

But thou my Soul thy *ſtrong Conviction* ſhew,
And never *reach* at *Bliſs* again.
Our *beſt* good here is Nature's *bounds* to *know*
And thoſe attempts to *ſpare*, which elſe would be in *vain.*

Here then Contain thy self, nor higher good
In this *inchanted* place purſue.
And pitty thoſe *ſhortſighted* Souls that do,
This World is beſt *enjoy'd*, when 'tis beſt *underſtood*.

The Refuſal.

I.

THink not to Court me from my *dear Retreat*
No, I proteſt 'tis all in vain.
My Stars did never mean I ſhould be *great*,
And I the very thought *diſdain*.
Or if they did, their will I'le *diſobey*,
And in my *little Orb* remain as *Fix'd* as *they*.

II.

Honour, that *Ido'* which the *Moſt* adore
Receives no *Homage* from my Knee.
Content in privacy I value more
Than all *uneaſy* Dignity.
How ſhould that *Empty* thing deſerve *my* Care,
Which *Vertue* does not *need*, and *Vice* can never *bear*?

III.

Shall I change *ſolid* and *unenvy'd* joys
Of a *Serene* tho *humble* ſtate
For *ſplendid* trouble, pomp and ſenſeleſs noiſe?
This I *deſpiſe* as well as *hate*.
Poor gain of that Condition, which will be
Envy'd by *others*, and as much *diſlik'd* by *me*.

Hymn

Hymn to Darkneſs.

I.

HAil thou moſt *ſacred Venerable* thing,
What Muſe is worthy thee to ſing?
Thee, from whoſe pregnant *univerſal* womb
All things, even *Light* thy *Rival* firſt did Come.
What dares he not attempt that ſings of thee
Thou *Firſt* and greateſt *Myſtery*.
Who can the *Secrets* of thy eſſence tell?
Thou like the *light* of God art *inacceſſible*.

II.

Before *Great Love* this *Monument* did raiſe
This ample *Theater* of *Praiſe*.
Before the *folding Circles* of the Skie
Were *tuned* by him who is all *Harmony*.
Before the Morning Stars their *Hymn* began
Before the *Councel* held for *Man*.
Before the *birth* of either *Time* or *Place*
Thou reignſt *unqueſtion'd* Monarch in the *empty* Space.

III.

Thy *native* lot thou didſt to *light reſign*,
But ſtill *half* of the Globe is *thine*.
Here with a *quiet* but yet *awefull* hand
Like the *beſt* Emperours thou doſt command.
To thee the Stars *above* their *brightneſs* owe
And mortals their *repoſe below*.
To thy protection *Fear* and *Sorrow* flee,
And thoſe that *weary* are of *light*, find *reſt* in *thee*.

IV.

Tho *Light* and *Glory* be th' Almighty's *Throne*,
Darkneſs is his *Pavilion*.
From that his radiant *Beauty*, but from thee
He has his *Terrour* and his *Majeſty*.
Thus when he firſt proclaim'd his ſacred Law
And would his *Rebel* ſubjects *awe*,
Like Princes on ſome great *ſolemnity* (*thee*.
H' appear'd in's *Robes* of *State*, and Clad himſelf with

V.

The Bleſt above do thy ſweet *umbrage* prize,
When *Cloy'd* with light, they *veil* their eyes.
The *Viſion* of the Deity is made
More ſweet and *Beatific* by thy *Shade*.
But we poor *Tenants* of this Orb below
Don't *here* thy excellency's know,
Till Death our underſtandings does *improve*,
And then our *Wiſer ghoſts* thy ſilent *night-walks* love.

VI.

But thee I *now* admire, thee would I chuſe
For my *Religion*, or my *Muſe*.
'Tis hard to tell whether thy reverend ſhade
Has more good *Votarys* or *Poets* made.
From thy *dark Caves* were *Inſpirations* given
And from thick *groves* went *vows* to Heaven.
Hail then thou *Muſe's* & *Devotion's* Spring,
'Tis *juſt* we ſhould *adore*, 'tis *juſt* we ſhould thee *ſing*.

The Invitation.

Come my Beloved let us go forth into the Field, let us lodge in the Villages. Cantic. 7. 11.

I.

COme thou *divineſt* object of my love
This *Noiſy* Region don't with us agree,
Come let us hence remove,
I cannot here enjoy *my ſelf* or *thee*.
Here *Vice* and *Folly* keep their *Court*
Hither their *chiefeſt Favourites* reſort,
Debauchery has here her *Royal Chair*,
This is her great *Metropolis*,
What e're we ſee or hear *Contagion* is
Their *Manners* are *polluted* like the *air*.
From both unwholſom vapours riſe (ſkies.
And *blacken* with *ungrateful* ſteams the neighboring

II.

Come we'l e'n to our *Country Seat* repair
The *Native home* of *Innocence* and *Love*.
There we'l draw *purer* air
And pitty *Monarchs*, ſitting in our grove.
Here Vertue has her ſafe retreat
Abandon'd by the *Many* and the *great*.
Content does here her *peacefull* Scepter ſway
Here *Faithfulneſs* and *Friendſhip* dwell
And *Modeſty* has here her *humble* Cell,
Come my Beloved, Come, and let's away.
Be thou My *Angel* good and kind,
And I'l ne'r *look* at *Sodom* which we leave *behind*.

III.

In fields and flow'ry meadows, woods and groves
The *first* and *best* delights of humane kind,
There we'l enjoy our loves
All *free*, and only to our ſelves *confin'd*.
Here ſhall my eyes be fixt on thee
'Till every *Paſſion* be an *extaſy*.
Each *hour* to thee ſhall be *Canonical*,
The Sweets of *Nature* ſhall not *ſtay*
My Soul, but only ſhew to thee the way,
To thee. Thou *Beauty*'s great *Original*.
Come My Beloved let's go prove
Theſe ſweet Advantages of Peace, Content and Love.

Sitting in an Arbour.

I.

THus ye good Powers, thus let me ever be
Serene, retir'd, from *Love* and *Buſineſs* free;
The reſt of your great World I here reſign
To the *Contentions* of the *great*,
I only ask that this *Retreat*
This little *Tenement* be *mine*.
All *my* Ambition's to this *point* confin'd,
Others inlarge their *fortunes*, *I* my *mind*.

II.

How Calm, how happy how ſerene am I!
How *ſatisfy'd* with my *own* Company!
To few things *forreign* my Content I owe
But in my ſelf *have* almoſt all
Which I *dare* good or pleaſing call,
Or (what's as well) I *fancy* ſo.

Thus

Thus I come near my great Creator's ſtate,
Whoſe *whole* Bliſs in *himſelf* does *terminate.*

III.

Pleas'd with a various *Scene* of thought I lie,
Whil'ſt an *Obliging* Stream ſlides gently by
Silent and *Deep* as is the Bliſs I chuſe,
All round the little *winged* Quire
Pathetic, *tender* thoughts inſpire
And with their ſtrains provoke my Muſe.
With eaſe the *Inſpiration* I *obey*
And Sing as *unconcern'd* and as well *pleas'd* as they.

IV.

If ought below deſerve the name of Bliſs,
It muſt (what e're the great ones think) be this.
So once the travelling Patriarch doubly bleſt
With dreams divine from Heaven ſent,
And his own Heaven of Content,
On's rocky pillow took his reſt.
Angels ſtood ſmiling by and ſaid, were we our Bliſs
To change, *it ſhould be* for a ſtate like his.

V.

'Tis ſtrange ſo *cheap* and yet ſo *great* a good
Should by ſo very *Few* be *underſtood.*
That Bliſs which Others ſeek with toil and ſweat
For which they prodigally waſt
Their treaſures, and yet miſs at laſt,
Here I have at an *eaſy* rate.
So thoſe that *Coſtly Phyſic* uſe in vain,
Somtimes by ſome *Cheap by* Receipt their health obtain.

The Complaint.

I.

WEll 'tis a dull perpetual *Round*
Which here we silly mortals *tread*,
Here's nought I'll swear *worth living* to be found,
I wonder how 'tis with the *Dead*.
Better I hope, or else ye Powers divine
Unmake me, I my immortality *resign*.

II.

Still to be *Vex'd* by joys *delai'd*
Or by *Fruition* to be *Cloy'd*?
Still to be *wearied* in a *fruitless* Chase,
Yet still to *run*, and *lose* the race?
Still our *departed* pleasures to *lament*
Which yet when *present* gave us no *Content*?

III.

Is this the thing we so *extoll*,
For which we would *prolong* our *breath*?
Do we for this long life a *Blessing* Call
And *tremble* at the name of *Death*?
Sotts that we are to think by *that* we *gain*
Which is as well *retain'd* as *lost* with *pain*.

IV.

Is it for this that we *adore*
Physitians, and their art implore?
Do we bless *Nature's* liberal supply
Of *Helps* against *Mortality*?
Sure 'tis but Vain the *Tree* of *Life* to boast
When *Paradise* wherein it *grew* is *lost*.

V. Ye

V.

Ye Powers, why did you man create
With ſuch *inſatiable* deſire?
If you'd *endow* him with no more *eſtate*
You ſhould have made him *leſs aſpire.*
But now our appetites you *Vex* and *Cheat*
With *reall* Hunger, and *Phantaſtic* meat.

A Paſtoral

Upon the B. Virgin gon from Nazareth to viſit Elizabeth. Wherein the ſadneſs of the Country Nazareth is deſcribed during the abſence of the Virgin.

Tranſlated out of *Rapin.*

The ſpeakers are Aſor, Alphæus *and* Zebede.

Aſor. AND why *Alphæus,* in this ſweet ſhade doſt thou
Make *ſongs,* which are not ſeaſonable *now,*
Since we of fair *Parthenia* are bereft;
Parthenia has our fields and mountains left.
Alph. Ay ſomething 'twas my Pipe was t'other day
So *ſtrangely* out of tune, and in ſo hoarſe a Key.
Zeb. And I too this misfortune might have known
By ſome *late* ſigns, had my thoughts been my own.
My little Goats as I to Paſture led
When the graſs *riſes* from its *dewy bed.*
I wonder'd why the *new born* flowers hung down
Their languid heads, as if ſcorch'd by the Sun,

The

The *Lilly* and the *Roſe* to droop were ſeen,
And ſo did the immortal *Evergreen*,
Parthenia (alas) was gon ——
For thee ſweet Maid *Lilly* and *Roſe* did grieve
The *Evergreen* thy abſence did perceive.

Aſor. There grows a ſhady Elm in our yon grove
Where *Philomel* would conſtantly repair,
Sweet *Philomel* of all the *Joy* and *Love*
And with melodious Accents fill the air.
When *Parthenia* was here, this ſhady tree
Was never, never from her Muſic free.
But now divine *Parthenia* is gon
Silent and ſad ſhe wanders up and down
And among thorns and lonely hedges makes her moan.

Alph. Whil'ſt thou fair Nimph didſt bleſs us with thy ſtay
Each grove was ſprightly, every wood was gay.
The boughs with birds, the caves with Swains did ring,
And the ſhrill graſhopper about the fields did ſing.
But now each wood is ſilent as the grave,
Nor does the Shepherd whiſtle in his cave,
Nor does the Bird ſit Chirping on the bough,
Nor is the graſhopper to be heard *now*.

Zeb. The Fields with living Springs were fruitful made,
And every Spring had his refreſhing ſhade.
Sweet flowers to the Bees were ne're deny'd,
The Fold with graſs was conſtantly ſupplied.
Now *Parthenia* is gon th' induſtrious Bee
Can't flowers procure with all his induſtry,
The Folds want graſs, the Fields their living Springs,
Nor have the Fountains *now* their *ſhady* coverings.
Divine *Parthenia*! with thee we've loſt
All the delights our Rural life could boaſt.

Aſor. My little Goats were boldly wont to go
And climbe the deſert hills, my Sheep would do ſo too.
Then happy Sheep, the Wolf the Fold did ſpare,
The Heat the infant trees, the Rain the ripen'd ear.

Alph.

Alph. Thou now perhaps ſweet Nymph art trave'ling
Some Craggie hills, unknown to thee before, (o're
Whileſt we ſitt here among the ſhady trees,
And *ſwallow down* each Cool refreſhing breeſe.

Zeb. Say you ſweet Weſtern blaſts that *gently* blow
And you fair Rivers that as *ſwiftly* flow,
You who ſo often have been vocal made
By Swains that *pipe* and *ſing* under the ſhade,
Say, now while *Phœbus* holds the middle Skie
Under what Rock does ſweet *Parthenia* ly?
Or through what Coaſts may I her wandrings trace?
Or in what fountain ſees ſhe now her lovely face?
Ah! tho our way of life be plain and courſe
Yet don't thou like thy Country e're the worſe
Since 't 'as thy happy *Parent* been and *Nurſe*.

Aſor. Ah! where's that ſweet retreat can thee detain
If thou thy native Country doſt diſdain?
Here are pure ſprings, and o're the ſprings are bowres,
Fine woods and fruit-trees, and a *world* of flowers.

Alph. But why fair Nymph would'ſt thou be abſent
When the ſweet Strawberry raiſes up his head (now.
Like Morning Sun all delicately red,
And Odorous bloſſoms ſpring from every bough.

Zeb. Don't you my Sheep *that* yonder bank come near
'Tis to *Parthenia* ſacred all that's there,
Nor wou'd the graſs be toucht by any but by Her.

Aſor. Before fierce *Boreas* blow with's boiſterous mouth,
Or rainy weather come on from the South
Be ſure *Parthenia* to return again
Leſt by the Cold thou ſuffer or the rain.

Alph. In a choice Garden is reſerv'd for thee
Sweet *Marioram*, and a large Myrtle tree.
Myrtles thou always lov'ſt, come then if now
Thou ſtill lov'ſt flowers as thou wer't wont to do.

Zeb. Ripe apples now hang dangling on the tree
Ready to drop, and only ſtay for thee.

The

The Fig of thy delay too does complain
The tender Fig, but let them both remain
'Till thou to thy dear *Nazareth* return again.

Aſor. Return ſweet Nymph, and with thee thou ſhalt bring
All the delights and beautys of the Spring.
Freſh graſs again ſhall on the mountains grow,
The Rivers ſhall with milk and nectar flow.
The woods ſhall put on their green Livery,
And Nature in her *pomp* ſhall wait on thee.
The Country Swains ſhall flowers and Preſents bring,
And I a Violet garland for my Offering.
With me ſhall *Azarias* come along
Who with a ſmooth-wrought Pipe ſhall play the Song,
The Song that Iſrael's ſhepherd as he ſtood
By Jordan's bank, playd to the *liſtning* flood.

Alph. But if thou longer ſhould'ſt our hopes deceive,
With ruſhes I'l a basket for thee weave,
Here thy own *Nazareth* I'l repreſent,
How all things here thy abſence do lament,
The little goats thou wandring here ſhalt ſee
Mournful and ſad, and all for want of thee.
The Rivers which before flow'd ſwift and clear
As glad the image of thy face to bear,
Shall move benumm'd and flow, whileſt on each hand
Appears the *thirſty* and *forſaken* ſand.
The Corn ſhall droop and languiſh in the field,
The Meadows no freſh graſs or herb ſhall yield,
The Fir-tree which with ſtately pride before
Her curious ſhady locks towards heaven ſpread
Shall now with downcaſt boughs, and penſive head
Thy abſence mourn and thy return implore.
Thou round about ſhalt all things weeping ſee,
If tears in *rush-work* may decipher'd be.

Zeb. Preſerve ye Powers, if you don't us diſdain
The Nymph, whileſt ſhe runs panting o're the plain.

And while ſhe's abſent ſince ſhe once had love
For theſe our fields, take care ye powers above
That neither rivers do their banks o'reflow (throw.
Nor Storms the paſtures ſpoil, or ripen'd corn o're-
(be free
Aſor. From night-fires let our ſtalls (ſweet Nymph)
Defend from heat the Roſe, from cold the Myrtle-tree,
While Roſe and Myrtle are belov'd by thee.
That if you chance to caſt a longing eye
Back on theſe fields, now naked and forlorn,
We may have ſtill ſome flowers left to ſupply
Garlands t' expreſs our Joy, and Dreſſes you t' adorn.
Alph. Haſte not, if through rough ways thy journy lye,
Haſt not, the Heat will prove an injury.
Let not the Sun thy *brighter* Beautys ſpoil.
Ah! why wilt thou undoe thy ſelf with too much toil?
Take pleaſing ſhelter in ſome gentle ſhade
Till the day ſlacken, and the heat b' allayd.
Zeb. Parthenia why doſt thou our hopes prolong?
Perhaps too ſome ill Pipe, and worſer ſong
Now grate thy ears, whil'ſt thy poor Country ſwain
On the deaf winds beſtows ſweet lays in vain.
Hang there my Pipe till ſhe return, and be
A ſilent Monument of my Miſery.
For what are ſongs or mirth without her Company?
Azor. Our hills ſhall mourn while diſtant coaſts you bleſs
Anamis ſhall not dance nor *Sabaris*.
The fields, the naked fields no ſongs ſhall know,
And Brooks their diſcontent by murmuring ſtreams ſhall ſhew.
Thus did the Swains the abſent Nymph lament,
The neighboring woods to Heav'n the doleful Accents ſent.

The tenth Ode of the ſecond Book of Horace *tranſlated.*

I.

'Tis much the *better* way, believe me 'tis,
Not far to venture on the great *Abyſſe*,
Nor yet from ſtorms thy Veſſel to ſecure,
To touch too nigh upon the *dangerous* ſhore.

II.

The *Golden Mean*, as ſhe's too *nice* to dwell
Among the ruins of a filthy Cell,
So is her *Modeſty* withall as great
To baulk the *envy* of a Princely ſeat.

III.

Th' *ambitious* Winds with greater *ſpite* Combine
To *ſhock* the grandeur of the *ſtately* Pine.
The *height* of ſtructures makes the ruin *large*, (charge.
And Clouds againſt high hills their *hotteſt* bolts diſ-

IV.

An even *well-pois'd* mind an *evil* ſtate
With *Hope*, a *good* with *Fear* does moderate.
The Summers *pride* by Winter is brought down,
And flowers again the *Conquering* ſeaſon *Crown*.

V.

Take heart, nor of the laws of fate Complain,
Tho now 'tis *Cloudy*, 'twill *Clear* up again.
The bow *Apollo* does not always uſe
But with his *milder* lyre ſometimes awakes the Muſe.

VI. Be

VI.

Be life and ſpirit, when fortune proves unkind,
And *ſummon* up the vigour of thy mind.
But when thou'rt driven by too *officious* gales,
Be wiſe, and *gather* in the *ſwelling* ſails.

The Diſcouragement.

I.

WHat wou'd the *wiſe* men's Cenſure be
I wonder, ſhould they hear me ſay
I was reſolv'd to throw my *Books* away,
How wou'd ſome *ſcorn*, and others *pitty* me!
Sure he's in *love*, 'tis for ſome Charming *Eve*
That he like *Adam Paradiſe* does *leave*.
This only difference would be
Between my great *grandſire* and me,
That I *my Paradiſe* forgo
For *want* of appetite to *know*.

II.

'Tis not that Knowledge I *deſpiſe*
No, you miſconſtrue my deſign,
Or that to *Enthuſiaſm* I incline
And hope by *Inſpiration* to be *wiſe*.
'Tis not for this I bid my Books adiew
No, I love *Learning* full as well as you.
And have the *Arts* great *Circle* run
With as much *Vigour* as the *Sun*
His *Zodiac* treads, till t'other day
A *thought* ſurpriſed me in my way.

III.

Thought I, for any thing I know
What we have *ſtamp'd* for *ſcience* here,
Does only the *Appearance* of it wear
And will not *paſs* above, tho *Current* here below.
Perhaps they've other *rules* to reaſon by,
And what's *Truth* here, with them's *Abſurdity*.
We *Truth* by a *Refracted* ray
View, like the *Sun* at *Ebb* of day.
Whom the groſs *treacherous Atmoſphere*
Makes where it is not, to *appear*.

IV.

Why then ſhall I with ſweat and pain
Digg Mines of *diſputable* oare?
My *labour's* certain, ſo is not my *ſtore*,
I may hereafter *unlearn* all again.
Why then for *Truth* do I my ſpirits waſt,
When after all I may be *gull'd* at *laſt*?
So when the honeſt *Patriarch* thought
With ſeven years labour he had bought
His *Rachels* love, by *morning* light
He found the *errour* of the *night*.

V.

Or grant ſome *Knowledge* dwells below,
'Tis but for ſome few years to ſtay
Till I'm ſet looſe from this *dark* houſe of Clay,
And in an *Inſtant* I ſhall all things know.
Then ſhall I learn t' *Accumulate Degrees*
And be at once made *Maſter* of *all Sciences*.
What need I then *great ſumms* lay out,
And that *Eſtate* with care *foreſtall*,
Which when few years are come about
Into my hands of *Courſe* will *fall*?

The

The 63 Chap. of Iſaiah *Paraphraſed to the 6 Verſe.*

A Pindarique Ode.

I.

STrange *Scene* of *glory*! am I well awake?
Or is't my Fancy's *wild* miſtake?
It cannot be a dream, bright *beams* of light
Flow from the *Viſion*'s face, and *pierce* my tender ſight.
No *Common* Viſion this, I ſee
Some *Marks* of more than *Human* Majeſty.
Who is this mighty *Hero*, who,
With *glorys* round his *head*, and *terrour* in his *brow*?
From *Bozrah* lo he Comes, a ſcarlet die
O'reſpreads his cloaths, and does out-vy
The *Bluſhes* of the *Morning* Sky.
Triumphant and *Victorious* he appears
And *Honour* in his *looks* and *habit* wears.
How *ſtrong* he treads, how *ſtately* does he go!
Pompous and ſolemn is his pace
And full of *Majeſty* as is his *face*,
Who is this mighty *Hero*, who?
'Tis I who to my promiſe faithful ſtand,
I who the Powers of *Death Hell* and the *Grave*
Have *foil'd* with this *all-conquering* hand,
I who moſt *ready* am, and *mighty* too to *ſave*.

II.

Why wear'ſt thou then this ſcarlet die
Say mighty *Hero*, why?

Why do thy garments look all red
Like them that in the *wine-fat* tread?
The *wine-preſs* I alone have trod
That vaſt *unweildy* frame, which long did ſtand
Unmov'd, and which no *mortal* force cou'd e're com-
That ponderous Maſſe I *ply'd* alone (mand,
And with me to *aſſiſt* were none,
A mighty task it was, *worthy* the Son of God.
Angels ſtood *trembling* at the dreadful ſight
Concern'd with what *ſucceſs* I ſhould go through
The work I undertook to do,
Inraged I put forth all my might
And down the *Engine* preſs'd, the violent force
Diſturb'd the *univerſe*, put *nature* out of Courſe.
The blood guſh'd out in ſtreams, and checquer'd o're
My garments with its deepeſt gore,
With *Ornamental* drops bedeck'd I ſtood
And writ my *Victory* with my *Enemy's Blood*.

III.

The day, the *Signal* day is come
When of my Enemys I muſt vengeance take,
The day when *Death* ſhall have its doom
And the *Dark Kingdom* with its *Powers* ſhall ſhake.
Fate in her *Kalendar* mark'd out this day with *red*
She folded down the iron leaf, and thus ſhe ſaid,
This day, if ought I can divine be true,
Shall for a ſignal Victory
Be Celebrated to Poſterity,
Then ſhall the *Prince* of *light* deſcend
And reſcue Mortals from th' *Infernal* Fiend
Break through his ſtrongeſt *Forts*, and all his *Hoſt* ſub-
This ſaid, ſhe ſhut the *Adamantin* Volumn Cloſe (due.
And wiſh'd ſhe *might* the *Crouding* years *tranſpoſe*;
So much ſhe long'd to have the *Scene diſplay*,
And ſee the vaſt *event* of this *important* day.

And

And now in midſt of the *revolving* years
This *great* this mighty one appears,
The faithful *Traveller* the Sun
Has *number'd* out the days, and the *ſet* Periods run.
I lookt, and to aſſiſt was none,
My *Angelic guards* ſtood trembling by,
But durſt not venture *nigh*,
In vain too from my *Father* did I look
For help, my *Father* me forſook.
Amaz'd I was to ſee
How all deſerted me.
I took my *fury* for my ſole ſupport
And with my *ſingle* arm the Conqueſt won,
Loud *Acclamations* fill'd all Heavens Court,
The *Hymning* guards above
Strain'd to an higher pitch of *Joy* and *Love*
The great *Jehovah* prais'd, and his *Victorious* ſon.

The Elevation.

I.

TAke wing (my Soul) and upwards bend thy flight
To thy *Originary* Fields of Light.
Here's nothing, nothing here below
That can deſerve thy longer ſtay,
A ſecret *whiſper* bids thee go
To purer air, and beams of *native* Day.
Th' *ambition* of the towring Lark outvy,
And like him *ſing* as thou doſt *upward fly*.

II.

How all things *leſſen* which my Soul before
Did with the *groveling* Multitude adore!

Thoſe *Pageant* Glorys diſappear
Which charm and dazle mortals eyes.
How do I in this *higher* Sphere,
How do I *mortals*, with their *joys* deſpiſe!
Pure, uncorrupted *Element* I breathe,
And pitty their groſs *Atmoſphere* beneath.

III.

How vile how ſordid *here* thoſe *Trifles* ſhew
That pleaſe the *Tenants* of that *ball* below!
But ha, I've loſt the little ſight,
The *Scene's* removed, and all I ſee
Is one *confuſed* dark maſs of night.
What nothing was, now *nothing ſeems* to be.
How calm this Region, how ſerene, how clear!
Sure I ſome ſtrains of Heavenly muſic hear.

IV.

On, on, the task is eaſy now and light,
No ſteams of Earth can here retard thy flight.
Thou needſt not now thy ſtrokes renew,
'Tis but to ſpread thy Pinions wide
And thou with eaſe thy ſeat wilt view
Drawn by the *Bent* of the *Ethereal* tide.
'Tis ſo I find; How ſweetly on I move
Not *let* by things *below*, and *help'd* by thoſe *above*!

V.

But ſee, to what new Region am I come?
I know it well, it is my native home.
Here led I once a life divine
Which did *all* good, no evil know,
Ah who wou'd ſuch ſweet bliſs reſign
For thoſe vain *ſhews* which *Fools* admire below?
'Tis true, but don't of Folly paſt complain,
But *joy* to ſee theſe bleſt abodes *again*.

VI.

A good retrieve: But lo while thus I ſpeak
With piercing rays th' eternal day does break.
The Beautys of the face divine
Strike ſtrongly on my feeble ſight,
With what bright glorys does it ſhine!
'Tis one *immenſe* and *everflowing* Light.
Stop here my Soul; thou canſt not *bear more* Bliſs,
Nor can thy now *rais'd* palate ever *reliſh leſs*.

Annotations.

THe general Deſign of the precedent Poem is to repreſent the gradual Aſcent of the Soul by Contemplation to the Supreme Good, together with its firm adherency to it, and its full acquieſcence in it. All which is done figuratively, under the Allegory of a Local Elevation from the feculent Regions of this lower World.

Pure uncorrupted Element I breathe
And pitty their groſs Atmoſphere beneath.

By *pure uncorrupted Element* is meant the refined intellectual entertainments of the *Divine life*, which are abſtracted from all Corporeal allays. Ἡδονὰς τὰς ἐωυτῆ as the divine *Plato* calls them, *thoſe Pleaſures which are proper to man as ſuch.* By *groſs Atmoſphere* is meant the more droſſy gratifications of the *Animal life*, which comes as ſhort in purity of the *Divine*, as the thick *Atmoſphere* does of the *pure Æther.*

No ſteams of Earth can here retard thy flight
&c.

The thing intended in this whole Stanza is to inſinuate the great facility and pleaſure of the Divine life to one that is arrived to an habit of it. For as the Magnetic influence of the earth

can

can have no force upon him that is placed in the upper Regions beyond the Sphere of its Activity, ſo (which is the Counterpart of the Allegory) the inclinations of the Animal nature have little or no power over him who has advanc'd to the Heights of habitual Contemplation. He looks down upon and obſerves the tumults of his ſenſitive appetite, but no way ſympathizes with it; He views the troubled Sea, but with the unconcernedneſs of a ſtander by, not as one that ſails in it. His Soul tho in Conjunction with his body is yet above the reach of its guſts and reliſhes, and from her ſerene ſtation at once ſees and ſmiles at its little complacencies. As *Lucan* ſays of the Soul of Pompey when advanced to the Ethereal Regions, .

-----Illic poſtquam ſe lumine vero
Implevit, ſtellaſque vagas miratur, & aſtra
Fixa polis, vidit quanta ſub nocte jaceret
Noſtra dies, riſitque ſui ludibria trunci.

And here I cannot chuſe but take notice of a Difficulty which is very incident to the buſineſs in hand, and wherewith I my ſelf was once very much perplex'd when I firſt applyed my thoughts to Moral Contemplations. 'Tis in ſhort this, we have a receiv'd Axiom that the Difficulty of the performance Commends the merit of a good Action. Now if ſo, it ſeems to follow that he who by a long habitual courſe of Piety and Vertue has made his duty eaſy

and

and natural to himself, will be less perfect than another who does hardly abstain from vice, or than himself before the acquisition of that habit. And then that Ἐγκράτια which *Aristotle* in the 7th of his Ethics makes only a *Semi-vertue* because of the difficulty of its performance, will for that very reason become *Virtus Heroica*, and if so, to make a progress in vertue will involve a contradiction. This I confess appear'd to me no inconsiderable intricacy when it first occurr'd to my thoughts, and I could not presently *unwind* my self from it.

But in answer to it I consider, 1. That when the Difficulty of the performance is layd to commend the Action, 'tis not so to be understood as if Difficulty did in it self as an ingredient add any moment to the excellency of a mans vertue, but only that 'tis a sign of it a *Posteriori*. Because were not a man endow'd with such a degree of vertue he would not be able to conquer the suppos'd Difficulty. So that if a man has a stock of Resolution sufficient to conquer such a difficulty, his vertue is the same tho he never be ingaged in it. For all the vertue is absolv'd in the degree of resolution, the difficulty is only a sign or indication of it. And upon this consideration 'tis that those whom nature has befriended with such an Εὐφυία or happy constitution as carries with it little or no temptation to vice may yet be accounted vertuous, because their Resolution to vertue may

be

be ſo firm and peremptory, that they would adhere to it notwithſtanding any Oppoſition.

2ly. I conſider that we are to diſtinguiſh of a twofold difficulty. 1. There is a difficulty which ariſes from the nature of the work it ſelf. And 2ly there is a Difficulty which ariſes from the Diſpoſition of the Agent. Now 'tis not this latter Difficulty that commends the excellency of vertue, but only the former, which is no way diminiſh'd by the habit. For after the induction of the habit the work remains the ſame in its own nature which it was before, the only change is in the Agent, who by his habit is render'd more expedite and ready for the performance of what is good. But as for the latter difficulty which proceeds from the Agent himſelf, that is ſo far from commending the worth of any good action, that it derogates much from its commendation. 'Tis eaſineſs of performance that here gives the value. He that abſtains from ſenſual pleaſures with great abhorrency, and has ſet himſelf at a wide diſtance from it, diſcovers more and has more of a vertuous reſolution than he whoſe mind ſtands almoſt in an equipoiſe, and does but juſt abſtain. For ſince we become vertuous by a right application of our wills, the excellency of our vertues muſt be meaſured by the greater or leſs ſtrength of our reſolutions. And conſequently he who by a ſtrong habit has made his vertue moſt natural and eaſy to

him

him is arrived to the greateſt Perfection.

Drawn by the bent of the Æthereal Tide;

This is in Alluſion to the *Carteſian* Hypotheſis of Vortices or whirl-pools of ſubtile matter. The Myſtic ſenſe is this, that the higher a Seraphic Soul advances in the Contemplation of the ſupreme good, the ſtronger he will find its Attractions.

I know it well, it is my native home.

This Verſe with the whole Stanza proceeds upon the *Platonic* Hypotheſis of Præ-exiſtence. I ſhall not here diſpute the Problem. Thoſe that deſire to be ſatisfied concerning it, I refer to the works of that Oracle of profound Wiſedom and Learning, the excellent Dr. *More*, to an ingenious Treatiſe call'd *Lux Orientalis*, and to the Account of *Origen*. In the mean while I hope the moſt rigid maintainer of *Orthodoxy* will allow me the liberty of alluding to it as an *Hypotheſis*, if not, I'm ſure the laws of *Poetry* will. My Buſineſs here was to imitate nature, and to repreſent how a Soul would be affected in ſuch a caſe, ſuppoſing it true: which I think I have not done amiſs. For ſo the Ingenious Platoniſt *Boethius*,

Huc te ſi reducem referat via,
Quam nunc requiris immemor,
Hæc dices, memini, patria eſt mihi,
Hinc ortus hic ſiſtam gradum.

Tis

'Tis one immenſe and everflowing light.

My buſineſs was here to give a Compendious deſcription of God. Now among all the repreſentations we have of him I thought none ſo agreeable to the Genius of Poetry as a ſenſible one, and of all thoſe I could not find a better in all the Inventory of the Creation than this of Light. I ſhall not here endeavour a Parallel; It may ſuffice to ſay, that the Repreſentation is warranted by Authority both human and Divine. The School of *Plato* deſcribes the nature of God by an immenſe light or Lucid Fountain ever flowing and diffuſing its refreſhing beams. And Holy Scripture goes further, and ſays in expreſs terms that *God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all.* John I. 5.

The

The Curiosity.

I.

UNhappy state of mortals here below,
Whom unkind Heaven does inspire
With such a *constant, strong desire*
And with such *slender facultys* to *know*!
And yet we not content to bear the pain
Of thirst *unquencht* and *fruitless* love,
With one more *curse* our ills improve,
And *toil* and *drudge* for what we ne're can gain.

II.

With what strange Frenzy are we all possest
Contented Ignorance to refuse,
And by *laborious* search to lose
Not the *enjoyment* only but our Rest!
Something like *Oar* does on the surface *shine*,
We taken with the specious shew,
With pains dig in the *flattering* Mine
But all alas in *vain*, *Truth* lies more *low*.

III.

The greatest Knowledge we can ever gain
From studying Nature, Books or men
Serves just t' employ dull hours, but then
It *yields* less *Pleasure* than it *costs* us *pain*.
Besides, so *short* and *treacherous* is our age,
No sooner are we *counted* Wise
But *envious* Death shuts up our eyes,
Just as our *part* is *learnt*; we quit the *Stage*.

IV. Could

IV.

Could I among the nobler ſpirits find
One that would lay aſide his *State*
And be my kind *confederate*
That *ſuddainly* I might inrich my mind!
'Twould be ſome pleaſure this, if happy I
Could once at eaſe ſit and *ſurvey*
And my *great* victory *enjoy*,
And not (as now) ſtill *labour on* and *dye*.

The 114. *Pſalm Paraphraſed.*

I.

WHen conquer'd by the Plagues of Moſes Rod
Th' Egyptian Tyrant gave command
That Iſrael ſhould depart his Land
Iſrael the choſen *Family* of God
Among them dwelt the *Holy One*,
Juda his *Sanctuary*, and Iſrael was his *Throne*.

II.

The Sea beheld this *Scene*, and did admire,
Each wave ſtood *ſilently* to ſee
The Power of the Divinity,
They ſaw, and fled the dreadful *guide* of *Fire*.
And *Jordan* too divided ſtood, (Flood.
The *Prieſts* the ſacred *Ark* bore through the *yielding*

III.

Mount Sinai with great Horrour ſtruck and dread
Forgot her weight, and in a trance
Like a light Ram did skip and dance,
She fear'd, and fain would hide her *Palſy* Head.

The

The Hills their *Mother* Mountain ſaw,
The little Hills, and like young ſheep they ſtood in awe.

IV.

What made thee to retreat thou Mighty Sea
Tell me, for never any *ſhore*
Knew ſuch a wondrous *Tide* before,
And thou great *Jordan* ſay, what ailed thee?
Say *ſacred* Mount what meant thy trance,
And you ſmall *under-hills* why did you skip and dance?

V.

You need not think it *ſhame* to *own* your *fear*,
What you diſmaid the ſame would make
The univerſal Fabrick ſhake,
The cauſe was great, for *Jacob's* God was there.
That God who did the *Rock* ſubdue,
And made it *melt* in *tears* tho *harder* far than *you*.

The 148 *Pſalm Paraphraſed.*

I.

O Come let all created force conſpire
A general *Hymn* of Praiſe to ſing,
Join all ye Creatures in one ſolemn Quire,
And let your *Theme* be Heaven's Almighty King.

II.

Begin ye bleſt Attendants of his Seat,
Begin your high *Seraphic* lays,
'Tis juſt you ſhould, your Happineſs is great,
And all you are to give again, is *Praiſe*.

III. Ye

III.

Ye glorious Lamps that rule both night and day
Bring you your *Alleluiahs* too,
To him that Tribute of Devotion pay
Which once blind *ſuperſtition* gave to you.

IV.

Thou *firſt* and *faireſt* of material kind
By whom his other works we ſee
Subtile and active as pure thought and mind,
Praiſe him that's *Elder* and more *fair* than thee.

V.

Ye Regions of the Air his praiſes ſing,
And all ye *Virgin* waters there
Do you *advantage* to the Conſort bring
And down to us the *Alleluiah* bear.

VI.

In chaunting forth the great Jehovah's Praiſe
Let theſe the upper Conſorts fill,
He ſpake, and did you all from nothing raiſe,
As you did then, ſo now obey his will.

VII.

His will, that fix'd you in a conſtant ſtate
And cut a *track* for Natures *wheel*,
Here let it run ſayd he, and made it fate,
And where's that Power which can this Law repeal?

VIII.

Ye Powers that to th' inferiour world retain,
Join you now with the Quire above.
And firſt ye Dragons try an higher ſtrain,
And turn your *angry* hiſſings into *Praiſe* and *Love*.

IX.

Let fire, hail, snow and vapours that ascend
Unlock'd by Phœbus searching rays
Let Stormy winds ambitiously contend
And all their wonted force imploy in Praise.

X.

Ye sacred tops which seem to brave the skies,
Rise *higher*, and when men on you
Religious rites perform and Sacrifice
With their *Oblations* send your *Praises* too.

XI.

Ye Trees whose fruits both men and beasts consume
Be you in Praises *fruitful* too;
Ye Cedars, why have you such choice *perfume*
But that sweet *Incense* should be made of you?

XII.

Ye Beasts with all the humble Creeping train
Praise him that made your lot so high.
Ye Birds who in a nobler Province reign
Send up your Praises higher than you fly.

XIII.

Ye sacred heads that wear *Imperial* gold
Praise him that you with power arrays,
And you whose hands the Scale of *Justice* hold
Be *Just* in this, and pay your *Debt* of Praise.

XIV.

Let sprightly youth give *vigour* to the Quire,
Each Sex with one another vie,
Let feeble Age *dissolv'd* in Praise *expire*,
And Infants too in *Hymns* their *tender* voices *try*.

XV. Praise

XV.

Praiſe him ye Saints who Piety profeſs
And at his Altar ſpend your days,
Ye ſeed of *Iſrael* your great Patron bleſs,
'Tis *Manna* this, for Angels food is *Praiſe*.

A Paſtoral

On the death of his Sacred Majeſty King CHARLES *the* Second.

Menalcas, *Thyrſis* and *Daphnis*.

Thyr. WHat, ſad? *Menalcas*, Sure this pleaſant ſhade
Was ne're for ſuch a mournful Tenant made.
All things ſmile round thee, and throughout the Grove
Nature diſplays a Scene of Joy and Love.
But Shepherd where's thy flock? ——
Sure they in ſome forbidden paſtures ſtray
Whileſt here in ſighs thou numberſt out the day.
Men. Ah *Thyrſis*, thou could'ſt witneſs heretofore
What ſtrange Affection to my flock I bore.
Thou know'ſt my *Thyrſis*, the *Arcadian* Plain
Could not afford a more induſtrious Swain.
But I no longer now that mind retain.
Thyr. What change ſo great but what Love's power can make?
Menalcas does his kids, and tender lambs forſake.
So I, when ſlave to *Galatea*'s eyes
Did neither City nor the Country prize,
But all their ſports, and my flock too deſpiſe.
Hang thou my Pipe (ſayd I) on yonder tree,
For then (alas) I had no taſt for melody.

Obſcurely in thick woods I ſate alone
And ſigh'd in conſort to the Turtle's moan.
Men. 'Tis not fond love that cauſes my diſtreſs
No *Thyrſis*, you'r miſtaken in your gueſs.
The glorious Prize I have in Triumph born,
I am no longer now *Alexis* ſcorn.
Or if I were, I now could be unmoved
At every ſcornful glance, nor care where e're he loved.
A nearer grief preys on my ſpirits now,
And I beneath a heavier burthen bow.
The gentle god of the *Arcadian* plains
Pan that regards the ſheep, *Pan* that regards the Swains
Great *Pan* is dead ----------
Throughout the fields the doleful tidings ran,
A ſwoon ſeiz'd all the Shepherds at the death of *Pan*.
Of *Pan*---- But ſee the reſt that Tree will ſhew
Which wears the ſad inſcription of my woe,
Where, with the bark my ſorrows too will grow.
Thyr. How Shepherd, is it by Fames trumpet ſaid
That *Pan* the beſt of all the gods, is dead?
Whom oft w' adored, and whom becauſe we knew
As *good* as they, we thought him as *immortal* too?
'Tis ſtrange; but Omens now I find are true.
In yonder Copſe a ſhady Oak there ſtood,
Stately, well rooted, and it ſelf a wood,
Her branches o're the inferiour trees were ſpread.
Who all adored her as their ſoveraign head,
Hither, when heated by the guide of Day
While their young wanton goats did skip amd play
Hither the Swains would conſtantly repair,
Here ſing, and in the ample ſhade drink freſher air.
This Tree when I my goats to paſture drove
While all was *clear above*, and *ſtill* throughout the *grove*.
Struck by ſome ſecret force fall down I ſaw, (& awe.
The wood-Nymphs all were ſeiz'd with wonder, grief

Nor had I left this ruin far behind
When lo (ſtrange ſight) a Nightingal I find
Which from brisk airs enlivening all the grove
Coo'd on a ſuddain like the mournful dove.
Amazed I ſtand, and on my pipe eſſay
With ſome brisk ſong her ſorrows to allay.
But all in vain. She from the lofty tree (like thee.
Kept on her ſad complaint, and mourn'd and droop'd
Men. And why theſe ſlighter things doſt thou relate?
Nature her ſelf perceiv'd *Pan*'s mighty fate.
She fainted, when he drew his lateſt breath,
And almoſt ſympathized with him to death.
Each Field put on a languid dying face, (graſs.
The ſheep not minding food, with tears bedew'd the
The Lions too in tears their grief confeſt
And ſavage Bears, *Pan*'s enemys profeſt.
The Nymphs all wept, and all the noble train
Of Deitys that frequent the Court of *Pan*.
Eccho that long by nought but voice was known
In ſounds repeated others woes, but wept her own.
Th' *Arcadians* mourn'd, and preſs'd beneath the weighty
With cruelty they charg'd the gods and every ſtar. (care
Thyr. And well they might; Heaven could not ſhew a
More mild, more good t' his Votarys than he. (Deity
He was all Love, all Peace, all Clemency.
H' allur'd the Love, and melted down the hate
Of all, he had no enemy but Fate.
Pan kept the Fields, from wolves ſecured the Stall,
He guarded both the humble Shrubs, and Cedars tall.
The Summers heat obey'd *Pan*'s gentle hand,
And Winter winds blew ſoft at his command, (land.
He bleſt the Swains with ſheep, and fruitful made their
Weep Shepherds, and in pomp your grief expreſs.
The ground with flowers, your ſelves with Cypreſs (dreſs.

Let the *Arcadians* in a ſolemn train
March ſlowly on, let mournful accents fill the plain,
Do this at leaſt in Memory of *Pan*.
Daph. But why this vain expence of tears & breath?
D' ye think *Pan* loſt and ſwallow'd up in death?
He lives, and with a pleas'd and wondring eye
Contemplates the new beautys of the sky.
Whence on theſe Fields he caſts propitious rays,
Now greater than our Sorrow, greater than our Praiſe.
I ſaw (for why mayn't I rehearſe the ſight)
Juſt as the Stars were kindled by the Queen of night
Another new-made milky way appear,
I ſaw, and wonder'd what event it might prepare.
When lo great *Pan* amazed my trembling ſight,
As through th' Æthereal plains he took his flight
Deck'd round with rays, and darting ſtreams of light.
Triumphant was his March, a ſacred throng
Of gods incloſed him, *Pan* was all their ſong,
The sky ſtill brighten'd as they went along.
Men. Thy viſion be all truth ——
But who ſhall now the royal ſheep-crook hold,
Who patronize the fields, who now ſecure the fold?
Daph. Diſcharge that care, the royal ſtock does yield
Another *Pan* to patronize the field.
An Heir of equal conduct does the Scepter ſway,
One who long nurtured in the Paſtoral way,
In peace will govern the *Arcadian* plains, (Swains.
Defend the tender flocks, and chear the drooping
Thyr. Come then, let's tune the pipe t' a briſker Key,
Let's with a dance our ſorrows chaſe away
And to new *Pan* in ſports devote the day.

Satiety.

I.

HAſt on dull *Time* thy winged minutes haſt,
I care not now how ſoon thou bring'ſt my laſt.
By what I've liv'd I plainly know
The *total* Sum of all below.
The days to come, altho they *promiſe* more,
I know will be as *falſe* as thoſe that went before.

II.

The *beſt* of life tho *once* enjoy'd, is vain,
And why ye Powers the ſelf ſame o're again?
The *Comedy's* ſo dull, I fear
'Twill not a *ſecond* acting bear.
No, I've enough; I cannot like the Sun
Each day the ſelf ſame ſtage, and ſtill *unwearied*, run.

III.

What cruel laws are theſe that me confine
Thus ſtill to dig in a *deceitful* Mine?
Be juſt ye Powers, my Soul ſet free,
Give her her *native* liberty.
'Tis 'gainſt the *Stage's* law to force my ſtay,
I've ſeen an *Act* or two, and do not like the *Play*.

The Reply.

I.

SInce you desire of me to know
Who's the *Wise* man, I'll tell you who,
Not he whose rich and fertile mind
Is by the *Culture* of the *Arts* refin'd,
Who has the *Chaos* of disorder'd thought
By Reason's *Light* to *Form* and method brought.
Who with a clear and piercing sight
Can see through *nicetys* as dark as *night*.
You err, if you think this is He,
Tho seated on the top of the *Porphyrian* tree.

II.

Nor is it He to whom kind Heaven
A secret *Cabala* has given
T' unriddle the *mysterious* Text
Of *Nature*, with dark *Comments more* perplext.
Or to *decypher* her *clean-writ* and *fair*
But most *confounding* puzling *character*.
That can through all her windings trace
This slippery wanderer, and *unveil* her face.
Her *inmost Mechanism* view,
Anatomize each part, and see her *through* and *through*.

III.

Nor he that does *the* Science know,
Our *only Certainty* below,
That can from *Problems* dark and nice
Deduce *Truths* worthy of a *Sacrifice*.
Nor he that can *confess* the stars, and see
What's writ in the black leaves of *Destiny*.

That

That knows their laws, and how the Sun
His *dayly* and his *annual* ſtage does run.
As if he did to them diſpenſe
Their Motions, and there ſate *ſupream Intelligence.*

IV.

Nor is it he (altho he boaſt
Of wiſdom, and *ſeem* wiſe to *moſt*)
Yet 'tis not he, whoſe buſy pate
Can dive into the deep intrigues of State.
That can the great *Leviathan* controul,
Menage and rule't, as if he were its *ſoul.*
The *wiſeſt* King thus gifted was
And yet did not in theſe *true Wiſdom* place.
Who then is by the *Wiſe man* meant?
He that can want *all this*, and yet can be *content.*

My Eſtate.

I.

HOw do I pity that proud wealthy Clown
That does with ſcorn on my low ſtate look down!
Thy vain contempt dull *Earth-worm* ceaſe,
I won't for refuge fly to this
That none of fortune's Bleſſings can
Add any *value* to the *man*,
This *all* the *wiſe* acknowledge to be *true*;
But know I am as *rich*, *more* rich than *you.*

II.

While you a *ſpot* of *earth* poſſeſs with care
Below the notice of the *Geographer*,
I by the *freedom* of my Soul
Poſſeſs, nay more, *enjoy* the *whole*,

To

To th' *univerſe* a claim I lay;
Your *writings* ſhew perhaps you'l ſay,
That's *your* dull way, my title runs more *high*,
'Tis by the *Charter* of *Philoſophy*.

III.

From that a *firmer* title I derive
Than all your *Courts* of *Law* could ever give.
A *title* that more *firm* does ſtand
Than does even *your* very *Land*.
And yet ſo generous and free
That none will e're *bethink* it me,
Since my poſſeſſions tend to no man's *loſs*,
I all *enjoy*, yet nothing I *ingroſs*.

IV.

Throughout the works divine I caſt my eye,
Admire their *Beauty* and their *Harmony*.
I view the glorious Hoſt above
And him that made them *Praiſe* and *Love*.
The flowry meads and fields beneath
Delight me with their odorous breath.
Thus is my joy by *you* not underſtood
Like that of *God*, when he ſaid *all* was *good*.

V.

Nay (what you'd think leſs likely to be true)
I can enjoy what's *yours* much more than *you*.
Your meadow's *beauty* I ſurvey
Which you prize only for its *hay*.
There can I ſit beneath a tree
And write an *Ode* or *Elegy*.
What to *you care*, does to *me pleaſure* bring,
You *own* the *Cage*, I in it *ſit* and *ſing*.

The Conqueſt.

I.

IN Power or Wiſdom to contend with thee
Great God, who but a *Lucifer* would dare;
Our ſtrength is but infirmity,
And when we this perceive our ſight's moſt clear
But yet *I* will not be excell'd thought I
In *Love*, in *Love* I'll with my Maker vy.

II.

I view'd the glorys of thy Seat above
And thought of every Grace and Charm divine,
And further to encreaſe *my* love
I meaſured all the Heights and Depths of *thine*.
Thus there broke forth a Strong and Vigorous flame
And almoſt melted down my mortal frame.

III.

But when thy Bloudy Sweat and Death I view
I own (Dear Lord) the conqueſt of thy love,
Thou doſt my higheſt flights outdo,
I in a lower orb, and ſlower move.
Thus in this ſtrife's a double weakneſs ſhewn,
Thy Love I cannot *equal*, nor yet *bear* my *own*.

The Impatient.

I.

WHat *envious* laws are thoſe of Fate
Which fix a gulph (Bleſt Souls) 'twixt us and you?
How 'twou'd refreſh and chear our Mortal ſtate
When our dejected looks confeſs
The emptineſs of *earthly* bliſs,
Could we in this *black night* your brighter glorys view!

II.

Vain comfort when I thus complain
To hear the Wiſe and Solemn gravely ſay,
Your grief and curioſity reſtrain,
Death will e're long this Bar remove,
And bring you to the Bleſt above,
Till then with this *great Proſpect* all your longings ſtay.

III.

But ah the joy peculiar here
Does from the greater *excellence* ariſe
'Twill be worth nothing in an *equal* Sphere.
Let me your noble converſe have
Bleſt Spirits, on this ſide the grave,
I ſhall hereafter be as great as you, as wiſe.

IV.

Beſides when plung'd in bliſs *divine*
I ſhall not taſt, or need this *leſſer* joy.
What comfort then does from this Proſpect ſhine?
'Tis juſt as if in depth of night
You robb a Traveller of his light
And promiſe to reſtore't when 'tis clear *day*.

Content.

Content.

I.

I Bleſs my ſtars I envy none
Not great, nor wealthy, no nor yet the *Wiſe*,
I've learnt the Art to like my own,
And what I can't attain to, not to prize.
Vaſt Tracts of Learning I deſcry
Beyond the Sphere perhaps of my Activity,
And yet I'm ne're the more concern'd at this,
Than for the *Gems* that lye in the profound *Abyſs*.

II.

Should I my proper lot diſdain
As long as further good eclipſes mine,
I may t' eternity complain,
And in the Manſions of the Bleſt repine.
There ſhall I numbers vaſt eſpy
Of Forms more excellent, more wiſe, more Bleſt than I.
I ſhall not *then* lament my unequal fate,
And why ſhould larger Proſpects *now* moleſt my ſtate?

III.

Where all in equal ſtations move
What place for *Harmony* can there be found?
The lower Spheres with thoſe above
Agree, and dance as free and briskly round.
Degrees of *Eſſences* conſpire
As well as various *notes* t' accompliſh heaven's Quire.
Thus would I have't *below*, nor will I care
So the Reſult be *Harmony*, what *part I* bear.

Againſt

Againſt Knowledge.

I.

WEll, let it be the Cenſure of the Wiſe
That *Wiſdom* none but *Fools* deſpiſe,
I like not what they gravely preach
And muſt another Doctrin teach.
Since all's ſo falſe and vain below
There's nought ſo *indiſcreet* as this, to *know*.

II.

The thoughtleſs, dull and leſs diſcerning mind
No *flaws* in earthly joys can find,
He Cloſes with what Courts his ſight,
All Coin will paſs by his dim light.
Though often baulkt, he hopes for reſt,
Sleeps on and dreams, and is in *Errour* Bleſt.

III.

But he that has refin'd and high-rais'd ſenſe
Can nothing taſt but *excellence*.
Nor can he nature's faults ſupply
By Fancy's happy Imag'ry.
He ſees that all Fruition's vain,
Can't taſt the *preſent*, nor yet truſt *again*.

IV.

Our Joys like *Tricks*, do all on cheats depend,
And when once known are at an end.
Happy and *Wiſe* two Bleſſings are
Which meet not in this *mortal* Sphere,
Let me be ignorant *below*,
And when I've *Solid* good, then let me *Know*.

Seeing

Seeing a great Perſon lying in State.

I.

WEll now I needs muſt own
That I hate greatneſs more and more,
'Tis now a *juſt abhorrence* grown
What was Antipathy *before*,
With other ills I could diſpence,
And *acquieſce* in *Providence*.
But let not Heaven my *patience* try
With this *one Plague*, leſt I *repine* and *dye*.

II.

I knew indeed before
That 'twas the great man's wretched fate
While with the *living* to *endure*
The vain *impertinence* of *State*.
But ſure thought I, in *death* he'll be
From that and other troubles free.
What e're his *life*, he then will lye
As free, as undiſturb'd, as calm as I.

III.

But 'twas a groſs miſtake,
Honour that too *officious* ill,
Won't even his breathleſs corps forſake,
But *haunts* and waits about him *ſtill*.
Strange *perſecution*, when the grave
Can't the diſtreſſed *Martyr* ſave!
What *Remedy* can *there* avail
Where *Death* the great *Catholicon* does fail?

IV. Thanks

IV.

Thanks to my ſtars that I
Am with ſo low a fortune bleſt
That what e're *Bleſſings* fate *deny*,
I'm ſure of *privacy* and *reſt*.
'Tis well; thus long I am content,
And *reſt* as in my *Element*.
Then Fate, if you'l appear my friend,
Force me not 'gainſt my *nature* to *aſcend*.

V.

No, I would ſtill be *low*,
Or elſe I would be *very* high,
Beyond the ſtate which *mortals* know,
A kind of *Semi-deity*.
So of the Regions of the air
The *High'ſt* and *Loweſt* quiet are,
But 'tis this *middle Height* I fear,
For *ſtorms* and *thunder* are ingender'd *there*.

Second Chap. of the Cant. *from the* 10. *verſe, to the* 13.

I.

'T Was my Beloved ſpake,
I know his charming voice, I heard him ſay,
Riſe up my Love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

II.

The Winter all is paſt
And ſtormy winds that with ſuch rudeneſs blew,
The heavens are no longer *overcaſt*,
But *try* to look like *you*.

III.

The flowers their ſweets diſplay,
The Birds in ſhort *praludiums* tune their throat,
The Turtle in low murmurs does eſſay
Her melancholy note.

IV.

The fruitful Vineyards make
An odorous ſmell, the Fig looks freſh and gay,
Ariſe my Love, my faireſt one awake,
Awake and come away.

To a Friend in Honour.

I.

SOme thoughtleſs heads perhaps admire to ſee
That I ſo little to your *titles* bow,
But wonder not my Friend, I ſwear to me
You were as great *before* as *now*.
Honour to *you* does nothing *give*,
Tho from your *worth* much luſtre ſhe *receive*.

II.

Your *native* glory does ſo far outdo
That of the *Sphere* wherein you *move*,
That I can nothing but *your ſelf* in *you*
Obſerve, admire, eſteem or love.
You are a *Diamond* ſet in *gold*,
The Curious the *rich ſtone*, not *this* behold.

III.

All that to your late honour you can owe
Is only that you're brought in view,
You don't begin to *have*, but men to *know*,
Your *Votarys* are *increas'd*, not *you*.
So the Sun's height adds not t'his light,
But only does *expoſe* him more to *ſight*.

IV.

To ſome whoſe native worth more *dimly* ſhin'd
Honour might ſome *improvement* give,
As *metals* which the Sun has *leſs* refined
A *value* from their *Stamp* receive.
But *you* like *gold*, paſs for no more
Tho *Stamp'd*, than for your *weight* you wou'd before.

A divine

A divine Hymn on the Creation.

I.

AWake my Lyre, and thy *ſweet* forces joyn
With me to ſing an Hymn divine,
Let both our Strains in pleaſing numbers flow,
But ſee, thy ſtrings with tedioufneſs and pain
Ariſe into a tuneful ſtrain,
How can'ſt thou ſilent ly?
The univerſe is *Harmony*,
Awake, and move by *ſympathy*,
My *heart's* already *tuned*, O why art *thou* ſo *ſlow*.

II.

Jehovah is our Theme, th' eternal *King*,
Whoſe Praiſe *admiring* Angels ſing,
They ſee with ſteddy and attentive eyes
His *naked* Beautys, and from *Viſion* raiſe
To *wondrous* heights their *Love* and *Praiſe*.
We mortals only view
His *Back-parts*, and that *darkly* too,
We muſt fall *ſhort*, what ſhall we do,
But neither too can *they* up to his grandeur *riſe*.

III.

No power can juſtly praiſe him but muſt be
As great, as infinite as he,
He compreheuds his *boundleſs* ſelf alone,
Created minds too ſhallow are and dim
His *works* to fathom, much more *him*.
Our Praiſe at height will be
Short by a *whole Infinity*,
Of his all glorious Deity,
He cannot have the *full*, and ſtands in *need* of *none*.

IV.

He can't be *leſs*, nor can he more *receive*
But ſtands one fix'd *Superlative*.
He's in himſelf *compendiouſly* bleſt,
We acted by the *weights* of ſtrong deſire
To good *without* our *ſelves* aſpire,
We're always moving hence
Like lines *from* the *Circumference*
To ſome more *in-lodg'd* excellence,
But he is one unmov'd *ſelf-center'd* Point of *Reſt*.

V.

Why then, if *full* of bliſs that ne're could *cloy*,
Would he do ought but ſtill *enjoy*.
Why not *indulge* his *ſelf-ſufficing* ſtate,
Live to himſelf at large, calm and ſecure,
A *wiſe eternal Epicure*?
Why ſix days work, to frame
A monument of Praiſe and Fame
To him whoſe bliſs is ſtill the ſame?
What need the *wealthy coyne*, or he that's *Bleſt Create*?

VI.

Almighty *Love* the faireſt gem that ſhone
All-round, and *half* made up his *throne*,
His *Favorite* and *darling* excellence,
Whom oft he would his *Royal* vertue ſtile,
And view with a *peculiar* ſmile,
Love moved him to create
Beings that might participate
Of their Creator's happy ſtate,
And that *good* which he could not *heighten*, to *diſpence*.

VII.

How large thy empire, *Love*, how great thy ſway!
Omnipotence does thee obey.
What *complicated* wonders in thee ſhine!
He that t' *infinity* it ſelf is great
Has one way to be *greater* yet,
Love will the method ſhew,
'Tis to *impart*; what is't that thou
O ſoveraign Paſſion can'ſt not do?
Thou mak'ſt *Divinity* it ſelf much *more divine*.

VIII.

With *pregnant* love *full-fraught*, the great *Three-one*
Would now no longer be *alone*.
Love, gentle love *unlockt* his *fruitful* breaſt
And 'woke th' *Ideas* which there dormant lay,
Awak'd their Beautys they diſplay,
Th' Almighty ſmil'd to ſee
The comely form and harmony
Of his eternal *Imag'ry*,
He ſaw 'twas *good* and *fair*, and th' infant platform *bleſt*.

IX.

Ye ſeeds of Being in whoſe fair boſoms dwell
The Forms of all things poſſible,
Ariſe, and your Prolific force diſplay,
Let a fair iſſue in your *moulds* be *caſt*
To fill in part this empty waſt.
He ſpake. The Empty ſpace
Immediatly in *travel* was
And ſoon brought forth a *formleſs* maſs,
First matter came *undreſs'd*, ſhe made ſuch *haſt* t' obey.

X.

But ſoon a Plaſtic ſpirit did ferment
The liquid dusky element.
The Maſſe *harmoniouſly* begins to move
Let there be Light ſaid God, 'twas ſaid, and done,
The Maſſe *dipt through* with brightneſs ſhone.
Nature was pleas'd to ſee
This *feature* of Divinity,
Th' Almighty ſmiled as well as ſhe,
He own'd his *likeneſs* there, and did his *First-born* love.

XI.

But lo, I ſee a goodly frame ariſe,
Vaſt folding Orbs, and azure skies,
With lucid *whirle-pools* the vaſt Arch does ſhine,
The Sun by day ſhews to each world his light
The ſtars ſtand *ſentinel* by night.
In midſt of all is ſpread
That ponderous bulk whereon we tread,
But where is its foundation laid?
'Tis pompous all and great, and worthy hands divine.

XII.

Thy Temple's built great God, but where is he
That muſt admire both it and thee?
Ope one Scene more my Muſe, bleſs and adore,
See there in ſolemn Councel and debate
The great divine *Triumvirate*.
The reſt one Word obey'd,
'Twas done almoſt *before* 'twas ſaid,
But Man was not ſo *cheaply* made,
To *make* the world was *great*, but t' *epitomize* it *more*.

XIII. Th'

XIII.

Th' accompliſh'd work ſtands his ſevere review
Whoſe judgment's moſt exactly true.
In natures *Book* were no *Errata's* found,
All things are *good*, ſaid God, they anſwer well
Th' *Ideas* which within me dwell;
Th' Angelic voices join
Their *Praiſe* to the *Applauſe* divine,
The Morning ſtars in Hymns combine,
And as they ſung & play'd, the *jocant* Orbs danc't round.

XIV.

With this thy Quire divine, great God I bring
My *Euchariſtic* Offering.
I cannot here ſing more exalted layes,
But what's defective now I will ſupply
When I enjoy thy Deity.
Then may'ſt thou ſleep my Lyre,
I ſhall not then thy help require,
Diviner thoughts will then me fire
Than thou tho playd on by an Angels hand, canſt raiſe.

Plato's *two* Cupids.

I.

THe heart of man's a *living* Butt,
At which two different *Archers* ſhoot,
Their Shafts are *pointed* both with *fire*,
Both wound our hearts with *hot deſire*.

II.

In this they differ, he that lyes
A ſacrifice t' his Miſtreſs eyes,

In pain does *live*, in pain *expire*,
And *melts* and *drops* before the fire.

III.

But he that flame's with love divine
Does not in th' heat *consume*, but *shine*.
H' *enjoys* the fire that round him lyes,
Serenely *lives*, serenely *dyes*.

IV.

So *Devils* and *damned* Souls in hell
Fry in the fire with which they dwell,
But *Angels* suffer not the same,
Altho their *Vehicles* be *flame*.

V.

The heart whose fire's divine and chast
Is like the *Bush* that did not *waste*.
Moses beheld the flame with fear,
That *wasted* not, for *God* was *there*.

A Wish.

I.

WHatever Blessing you my *Life* deny
Grant me kind Heaven this one thing when I *dye*.
I charge thee guardian Spirit hear,
And as thou lov'st me, *further* this my Prayer.

II.

When I'm to leave this grosser Sphere, and try
Death, that amazing Curiosity,
When just about to breathe my last,
Then when no *Mortal* joy can strike my taste,

III. Let

III.

Let me ſoft melting ſtrains of Muſic hear
Whoſe Dying ſounds may ſpeak Death to my ear,
Gently the Bands of life unty,
Till in ſweet raptures I diſſolve and dye.

IV.

How ſoft and eaſy my new Birth will be
Help'd on by Muſic's gentle *Midwifery*!
And I who 'midſt theſe charms expire
Shall bring a Soul well *tuned* to Heaven's Quire.

To Dr. More.

Ode.

I.

GO Muſe, go haſten to the Cell of Fame
(Thou know'ſt her reverend aweful ſeat,
It ſtands hard by your bleſt retreat)
Go with a briſk alarm aſſault her ear,
Bid her her loudeſt Trump prepare
To ſound a more than Human name,
A name more excellent and great
Than ſhe could ever publiſh yet,
Tell her ſhe need not ſtay till *Fate* ſhall give
A *Licenſe* to his Works, and bid them *live*,
His Worth *now ſhines* through Envys baſe *Alley*,
'Twill fill her wideſt Trump, and all her Breath employ.

II.

Learning which long like an *inchanted* Land
Did Human force and Art defy
And ſtood the *Vertuoſo's* beſt Artillery,
Which nothing mortal could ſubdue,
Has yielded to this Hero's *Fatal* hand,
By him is conquer'd, held, and peopled too.
Like Seas that border on the ſhore
The Muſes *Suburbs* ſome poſſeſſion knew,
But like the deep Abyſs their *inner* ſtore
Lay unpoſſeſs'd, till ſeiz'd and own'd by you.
Truth's *outer Courts* were trod before,
Sacred was her *receſs, that* Fate reſerv'd for *More.*

III.

Others in Learning's *Chorus* bear their *part*
And the great Work diſtinctly ſhare,
Thou our great *Catholic Profeſſour* art,
All Science is annex'd to thy unerring *Chair.*
Some leſſer *Synods* of the Wiſe
The Muſes kept in Univerſitys,
But never yet till in *thy* Soul
Had they a Councel *Oecumenical.*
An Abſtract they'd a mind to ſee
Of all their ſcatter'd gifts, and ſumm'd them up in thee.
Thou haſt the Arts whole Zodiac run
And fathom'ſt all that here is known.
Strange reſtleſs Curioſity;
Adam himſelf came ſhort of thee,
He taſted of the *Fruit,* thou bear'ſt away the *Tree.*

IV.

Whileſt to be great the moſt aſpire
Or with *low* Souls to raiſe their fortunes *higher,*

Know-

Knowledg the chiefeſt Treaſure of the Bleſt
Knowledg the *Wiſe* man's *beſt* Requeſt
Was made thy choice, for this thou haſt declin'd
A life of noiſe, impertinence and State
And what e're elſe the Muſes hate
And mad'ſt it thy one buſineſs to inrich thy mind.
How calm thy life, how eaſy, how ſecure
Thou *Intellectual Epicure.*
Thou as another *Solomon* haſt try'd
All Nature through, and nothing to thy Soul *deny'd.*
Who can two ſuch examples ſhew?
He all things try'd t' *enjoy*, and you all things to *know.*

V.

By Babel's Curſe, and our Contracted ſpan
Heaven thought to check the ſwift career of man.
And ſo it prov'd till now, our age
Is much too ſhort to run ſo long a Stage.
And to learn words is ſuch a vaſt *delay*
That we're *benighted* e're we come half way.
Thou with unuſual haſt driv'ſt on
And doſt even *Time* it ſelf *out-run.*
No hindrance can retard thy Courſe
Thou rid'ſt the Muſes *winged* horſe,
Thy Stage of Learning ends e're that of Life be done.
There's now no work left for thy accompliſh'd mind
But to *Survey* thy Conqueſts, and *inform* mankind.

The Paſſion of the Virgin Mother

Beholding the Crucifixion of her divine Son.

I.

NIgh to the *Fatal* and yet *Soveraign* wood
Which crouds of wondring Angels did ſurround
Devoutly ſad the Holy Mother ſtood,
And view'd her Son, & ſympathized with every wound.

II.

Angelic piety in her mournful face
Like rays of light through a watry cloud, did ſhine,
Two mighty Paſſions in her breaſt took place
And like her Son ſh' appear'd, half human, half divine.

III.

She ſaw a blacker and more tragic Scene
Than e're the Sun before or then would ſee,
In vain did nature draw her dusky Skreen,
She ſaw, and wept, and felt the dreadful Agony.

IV.

Grief in the abſtract ſure can riſe no higher
Than that which this deep Tragedy did move,
She ſaw in tortures and in ſhame expire
Her Son, her God, her worſhip and her Love.

V.

That ſacred head which all divine and bright
Struck with deep awe the Votarys of the Eaſt,
To which a Star paid *Tributary* light,
Which the (*then joyful*) mother kiſs'd, adored and bleſt,

VI.

That head which Angels with pure light had crown'd
Where Wiſdom's Seat and Oracle was plac'd,
Whoſe air divine threw his Traitours to the ground,
She ſaw with pointed circles of rude thorns embrac'd.

VII.

Thoſe hands whoſe ſoveraign touch were wont to heal
All wounds and hurts that others did endure
Did now the peircings of rough iron feel,
Nor could the wounded heart of his ſad mother cure.

VIII.

No, No it bled to ſee his body torn
With nails, and deck'd with gems of purple gore,
On four great wounds to ſee him rudely born,
Whom oft her arms a happy burthen found before.

IX.

It bled to hear that voice of grief and dread
Which the Earths pillars and foundations ſhook,
Which rent the Rocks, and 'woke the ſleeping dead,
My God, my God O why, why haſt thou me forſook?

X.

And can the tide of Sorrow riſe more high?
Her melting face ſtood thick with tears to view
Like thoſe of heaven his ſetting glorys dye,
As flowers left by the Sun are charged with evening dew.

XI.

But ſee grief ſpreads her empire ſtill more wide,
Another Spring of tears begins to flow,
A barbarous hand wounds his now ſenſeleſs ſide,
And death that ends the *Son*'s, renews the *Mother*'s woe.

XII.

She ſees now by the rude inhuman ſtroke
The *Myſtic* river flow, and in her breaſt
Wonders by what ſtrange *figure* th' Angel ſpoke
When amongſt all the Daughters he pronounc'd *her Bleſt.*

XIII.

Thus far did Nature, pity, grief and love
And all the Paſſions their ſtrong efforts try,
But ſtill tho dark *below*, 'twas clear *above*,
She had (as once her Son) her *ſtrengthning* Angel by.

XIV.

Gabriel the chiefeſt of th' Almighty's train
That firſt with happy tidings bleſt her ear,
Th' Archangel Gabriel was ſent again,
To ſtem the tide of grief, and qualify her fear.

XV.

A large *Perſpective* wrought by hands divine
He ſet before her firſt *enlightned* eye,
'Twas hewn out of the heaven *Chriſtalline*,
One of whoſe ends did *leſſen*, th' other *magnify*.

XVI.

With that his ſufferings he expoſed to ſight
With this his Glorys he did repreſent,
The weight of this made th' other ſeem but light,
She ſaw the mighty odds, adored, and was content.

Damon and Pythias.

Or,

Friendſhip in perfection.

I.

Pyth. 'TIs true (my *Damon*) we as yet have been
Patterns of conſtant love I know,
We have ſtuck ſo cloſe, no third could come between;
But will it (*Damon*) will it ſtill be ſo?

II.

Da. Keep *your* love true, I dare engage that mine
Shall like my Soul immortal prove.
In friendſhip's Orb how brightly ſhall we ſhine
Where all ſhall *envy*, none *divide* our love!

III.

Pyth. Death will; when once (as 'tis by fate deſign'd)
T' *Elyſium* you ſhall be remov'd,
Such ſweet Companions there no doubt you'l find
That you'l forget that *Pythias* e're you lov'd.

IV.

Da. No, baniſh all ſuch fears, I then will be
Your Friend and guardian Angel too.
And tho with more refined Society
I'l leave *Elyſium* to converſe with *you*.

V.

Pyth. But grant that after fate you ſtill are kind,
You cannot long continue ſo,
When I like you become all thought and mind
By what mark then ſhall we each other know?

Da. With

VI.

Da. With care on your laſt hour I will attend,
And leſt *like* Souls ſhould me deceive
I cloſely will embrace my *new-born* friend,
And never after my dear *Pythias* leave.

The Indifferency.

I.

WHether 'tis from ſtupidity or no
I know not, but I ne'r could find
Why I one Thought or Paſſion ſhould beſtow
On *Fame*, that gaudy *Idol* of mankind.
Call me not *Stoic*, no I can purſue
Things *excellent* with as much *zeal* as you,
But here I own my ſelf to be
A very *luke-warm* Votary.

II.

Should thouſand excellencys in me meet
And one bright *Conſtellation* frame
'Tis ſtill as men's phantaſtic humours hit
Whether I'm *written* in the *book* of *Fame*.
So tho the Sun be ne're ſo fair and bright
And ſhine with free, uninterrupted light,
'Tis as the Clouds *diſpoſed* are,
E're he can *paint* his *image* there.

III.

The world is ſeldom to true merit juſt
Through *Envy* or through *Ignorance*.
True worth like *Valour* oft lies hid in duſt,
While ſome *falſe* Hero's graced with a *Romance*.

The

The *true* God's Altar oft neglected lies
When *Idols* have Perfumes and Sacrifice.
And tho the *true* one some *adore*
Yet those that do *blaspheme* are *more*.

IV.

Yet grant that merit were of fame secure,
What's *Reputation*, what is *Praise*?
Who'd one day's toil, or sleepless night endure
Such a vain *Babel* of *esteem* to raise?
Pleas'd with his hidden worth the *great* and *wise*
Can like his God this *forreign* good despise,
Whose happiness would ne're be less
Tho none were made to *praise* or *bless*.

V.

Even I who dare not rank my self with those
Who *pleas'd* into themselves retire,
Find yet in great *Applauses less* repose,
And do *Fame* less, less than my *self* admire.
Let her loud trumpet sound me far and near,
Th' *Antipodes* will never of me hear.
Or were I known throughout this *ball*,
I've but a *Point*, when I have *All*.

VI.

Then as for glory which comes after Fate,
All that can then of me be said
I value least of all, it comes too *late*,
'Tis like th' *embalming* of the *senseless* dead.
Others with *pleasure*, what me *labour* cost
May read, and praise, but to *me* all is lost.
Just as the Sun no joy does find
In *that* his light which chears *mankind*.

VII.

Or ſhould I after Fate has cloſed my eyes
Should I my *living* glorys know,
My *wiſer*, *improved* Soul will then deſpiſe
All that poor Mortals ſay or think below.
Even they who of mens ignorance before
Complain'd, becauſe few did their works adore,
Will then the ſelf ſame *Cenſure* raiſe
Not from their *ſilence*, but their *praiſe*.

VIII.

Or grant 'twou'd pleaſure bring to know that I
After my death *live* ſtill in *Fame*,
Thoſe that *admire* me too muſt ſhortly *dye*,
And then where's my *Memorial*, where my *name*?
My Fame tho *longer-lived*, yet once ſhall have
Like me its *Death*, its *Funeral*, its *Grave*.
This only *difference* will remain,
I ſhall, *that* never riſe again.

IX.

Death and Deſtruction ſhall e're long deface
The World, the *work* of hands *divine*,
What Pillars then or Monuments of braſs
Shall from the general ruin reſcue *mine*?
All then ſhall equal be; I care not then
To be a while the *talk* and *boaſt* of *men*.
This only grant, that I may be
Prais'd by thy *Angels*, Lord, and *thee*.

The Infirmity.

I.

IN other things I ne'r admired to ſee
Men injured by *extremity*.
But little thought in *Happineſs*
There might be danger of *exceſs*.
At leaſt I thought there was no fear
Of ever meeting with *too much* on't *here*.

II.

But now theſe melting ſounds ſtrike on my ſenſe
With ſuch a *powerful* excellence,
I find that Happineſs may be
Screw'd up to ſuch *extremity*,
That our too Feeble facultys
May not be ſaid t' *enjoy*, but *ſuffer* Bliſs.

III.

So frail's our mortal ſtate, we can ſuſtain
A mighty *bliſs* no more than *pain*.
We loſe our weak *precarious* breath
Tortured or *tickled* unto death.
As *ſprights* and *Angels* alike fright
With too much *Horrour*, or with too much *light*.

IV.

Alas; I'm *over-pleas'd*; what ſhall I do
The *painful* joy to *undergo*?
Temper your too melodious ſong,
Your *doſe* of bliſs is much too *ſtrong*,
Like thoſe that too rich Cordials have,
It don't ſo much *revive*, as make me *rave*.

V.

What *Cruelty* 'twou'd be *ſtill* to confine
A *mortal* ear to Airs *divine*?
The Curſe of Cain you have on me
Inverted by your Harmony,
For ſince with that you charm'd my ear
My *Bliſs* is much too *great* for me to *bear*.

VI.

Relieve this *Paroxyſm* of delight,
And let it be leſs *exquiſite*.
Let *down* my Soul; 'tis too high *ſet*,
I am not *ripe* for *Heaven* yet.
Give me a Region more *beneath*,
This *Element*'s too *fine* for me to *breath*.

The Arreſt.

I.

WHither ſo faſt fond Paſſion doſt thou rove,
Licentious and unconfined?
Sure this is not the proper *Sphere* of *Love*,
Obey; and be not *deaf*, as thou art *blind*.
All is ſo falſe and treacherous here
That I muſt *love* with *Caution*, and *enjoy* with *fear*.

II.

Contract thy Sails, leſt a too *guſty* blaſt
Make thee from ſhore launch out too far,
Weigh well this Ocean, e're thou make ſuch haſt,
It has a nature very *ſingular*.
Men of the treacherous *ſhore* complain
In *other* Seas, but *here* moſt danger's in the *Main*.

III. Should'ſt

III.

Should'ſt thou my Soul indulge thy forward love,
And not controul its headlong courſe,
The Object in th' enjoyment *vain* will prove,
And thou on *Nothing* fall with *all* thy *force*.
So th' eager Hawk makes ſure of's prize,
Strikes with *full* might, but *overſhoots* himſelf and *dyes*.

IV.

Or ſhould'ſt thou with long ſearch on ſomething light
That might content and *ſtay* thy mind,
All good's here *wing'd*, and ſtands prepared for flight,
'Twill leave thee *reaching out* in vain, behind.
Then when *unconſtant* fate thou'ſt proved,
Thou'lt ſigh, and ſay with tears, *I wiſh I ne're had loved*.

V.

Well then ye ſofter Powers that love Command
And wound our breaſts with *pleaſing* ſmart,
Gage well your *Launce*, and bear a ſteddy hand,
Leſt it run in too *deep* into my heart.
Or if you're fix'd in your deſign
Deeply to wound my heart, wound it with *love divine*.

To the Memory of my dear Neece M. C.

I.

BY tears to eaſe my grief I've try'd,
And Philoſophic med'cins have applied,
From Books and Company I've ſought relief,
I've uſed all *ſpells* and *charms* of Art
To *Lay* this *Troubler* of my heart,
I have, yet I'm ſtill *haunted* by my grief.
Theſe give ſome *eaſe*, but yet I find
'Tis *Poetry* at laſt muſt *cure* my mind.

II.

Come then, t' aſſwage my pain I'l try
By the ſweet *magic* of thy *Harmony*.
Begin my Muſe, but 'twill be hard I know
For thee my Genius to *ſcrew*
To *heights* that to my *Theme* are due,
The *weight* of grief has *ſet* my Soul ſo *low*.
To grace her death my ſtrains ſhould be
As far above *Mortality* as *ſhe*.

III.

Is ſhe then *dead*, and can it be
That I can *live* to write her *Elegy*?
I hoped, ſince 'twas not to my Soul deny'd
To ſympathize in all the pain
Which ſhe tho *long*, did *well* ſuſtain,
T' have carry'd on the *ſympathy*, and *dy'd*.
But Death was ſo o'rpleas'd I ſee
At this *rich ſpoil*, that ſhe neglected *me*.

IV. Yet

IV.

Yet has ſh' of all things made me bare
But *Life*, nor was it *kindneſs* here to *ſpare*.
So when th' Almighty would t' inform mankind
His *Eaſtern Hero*'s patience try
With the *Extreams* of miſery,
He gave *thin* Charge to the malicious Fiend;
Of all Life's *Bleſſings* him deprive,
Vex him with *all* thy *Plagues*, but let him *live*.

V.

Yet I *will* live (ſweet Soul) to ſave
Thy *name*, ſince *thee* I cannot, from the grave.
I will not of this *burthen* Life complain
Tho *tears* than *verſes* faſter flow,
Tho I am *plung'd* in grief and woe,
And like th' inſpired *Sibylls* write in *pain*.
To *dye* for Friends is thought to be
Heroic, but I'll *Life* endure for thee.

VI.

'Tis juſt, ſince I in *thee* did *live*
That thou ſhould'ſt *Life* and *Fame* from *me* receive.
But how ſhall I this Debt of Juſtice pay?
The *Colours* of my Poetry
Are all too *dead* to *Copy* thee,
'Twill be *Abuſe* the beſt that I can ſay.
Nature that wrought thy curious frame
Will find it hard to draw *again* the *ſame*.

VII.

In *Council* the Almighty ſate
When he did *man* his *Maſter-piece* create.

His *Agent Nature* did the ſame for thee,
In making thee ſhe wrought for *Fame*,
And with *ſlow* progreſs drew thy frame,
As he that painted for *Eternity*.
In her *beſt Mould* ſhe did thee *caſt*,
But thou waſt *over-wrought*, and made *too fine* to *laſt*.

VIII.

Thy Soul the *Saint* of this fair *Shrine*
Was pure without *Alloy*, and all divine.
Active and nimble as *Æthereal* light,
Kind as the Angels are above
Who live on *Harmony* and *Love*,
The Rays thou ſhott'ſt were *warm*, as well as *bright*.
So mild ſo pleaſing was thy fire,
That *none* could *envy*, and *all muſt admire*.

IX.

Sickneſs to whoſe ſtrong *ſiege* reſign
The beſt of natures, did but let forth thine.
Wiſely thou did'ſt thy paſſions all Controul,
And like a Martyr in the fire
Devout and patient did'ſt expire,
Pains could *expel*, but not *untune* thy Soul.
Thou bore'ſt them all ſo *Moderately*
As if thou mean'ſt to teach how I ſhould *mourn* for *thee*.

X.

No wonder ſuch a noble mind
Her way again to Heaven ſo *ſoon* could find.
Angels, as 'tis but ſeldom they appear
So neither do they make long ſtay,
They do but viſit, and away,
Tis pain for them t' endure our too groſs Sphere.
We could not hope for a *Reprieve*,
She muſt *dye ſoon*, that made ſuch *haſt* to *live*.

XI. Hea-

XI.

Heaven did thy lovely presence want
And therefore did so *early* thee *transplant*.
Not 'cause he dar'd not *trust* thee longer here,
No, such sweet Innocence as thine
To take a *Stain* was too *divine*,
But sure he *Coveted* to have thee *there*.
For meaner Souls he could delay,
Impatient for thine, he would not *stay*.

XII.

The Angels too did covet thee
T' advance their *Love*, their *Bliss*, their *Harmony*.
They'd lately made an *Anthem* to their *King*,
An Anthem which contain'd a part
All sweet, and full of Heavenly Art,
Which none but thy *Harmonious* Soul could sing.
'Twas all Heaven's Vote thou should'st be gone
To *fill* th' Almighty's *Quire*, and to *adorn* his *Throne*.

XIII.

Others when gone t' eternal rest
Are said t' augment the *number* of the Blest.
Thou dost their very *Happiness* improve,
Out of the Croud they single thee,
Fond of thy sweet society,
Thou wast *our* Darling, and art so *above*.
Why should we of thy loss Complain
Which is not only *thine*, but *Heaven*'s gain?

XIV.

There dost thou sit in Bliss and light,
Whilest I thy praise in mournful numbers write.

There

There doſt thou drink at pleaſures virgin Spring,
And find'ſt no *leiſure* in thy Bliſs
Ought to admire *below*, but this
How I can *mourn*, when thou doſt *Anthems ſing*.
Thy pardon my ſweet Saint I implore,
My Soul ne'r *diſconform'd* from thine *before*.

XV.

Nor will I now; My tears ſhall flow
No more, I will be bleſt 'cauſe thou art ſo.
I'll borrow Comfort from thy happy ſtate,
In *Bliſs* I'll *ſympathize* with thee
As once I did in *miſery*,
And by *Reflection* will be Fortunate.
I'll practiſe now, what's done above,
And by *thy* happy ſtate my *own* improve.

The Reſignation.

I.

LOng have I view'd, long have I thought,
And held with *trembling* hand this *bitter Draught*,
'Twas now juſt to my lips applied,
Nature *ſhrank* in, and all my Courage *dy'd*.
But now Reſolv'd, and firm I'll be,
Since Lord, 'tis *mingled*, and *reach'd* out by *thee*.

II.

I'll truſt my great *Phyſitian*'s skill,
I know what *he preſcribes* can ne'r be ill,
To each *diſeaſe* he knows what's fit,
I own him *wiſe* and *good*, and do ſubmit.

I'll

I'll now no longer grieve or pine,
Since 'tis *thy* pleaſure Lord, it ſhall be *mine.*

III.

Thy Med'cine put's me to great ſmart,
Thou'ſt wounded me in my moſt *tender* part,
But 'tis with a deſign to cure,
I muſt and will thy *Soveraign touch* endure.
All that I prized below is gone,
But yet I ſtill will pray, *thy will be done.*

IV.

Since 'tis thy ſentence I ſhould part
With the moſt pretious treaſure of my heart,
I freely *that* and *more* reſign,
My *heart* it ſelf, as its *Delight*, is thine,
My little *All* I give to thee,
Thou gav'ſt a greater gift, thy *Son*, to me.

V.

He left true Bliſs and Joys above,
Himſelf he *emptied* of all good, but *love.*
For me he freely did forſake
More good, than he *from* me *can* ever *take.*
A *mortal* life for a *divine*
He took, and did at laſt even *that* reſign.

VI.

Take all great God, I will not grieve,
But ſtill will wiſh, that I had ſtill to give.
I hear thy voice, thou bid'ſt me quit
My *Paradiſe*, I bleſs and do ſubmit.
I will not murmur at thy word.
Nor beg thy Angel to ſheath up his ſword,

To my guardian Angel.

I.

I Own (my gentle guide) that much I owe
For all thy *tutelary* care and love,
Through life's *wild maze* thou'ſt led me hitherto,
Nor ever wilt (I hope) thy *tent* remove,
But yet t' have been completely true,
Thou ſhould'ſt have guarded her life too.
Thou know'ſt my Soul did moſt inhabit there,
I could have *ſpared* thee, to have guarded *her*.

II.

But ſince by thy neglect, or heavens decree,
She's gone to increaſe the *pleaſures* of the Bleſt,
Since in *this Sphere* my *Sun* I ne're ſhall ſee,
Grant me (kind Spirit) grant me this requeſt.
When I ſhall eaſe thy Charge and dye,
(For ſure I think thou wilt be by)
Lead me through all the numerous hoſt above,
And bring my *new-flown* Soul to her I love.

III.

With what high paſſion ſhall we then embrace!
What pleaſure will ſhe take t' impart to me
The Rites and Methods of that ſacred place,
And what a Heaven 'twill be to learn from thee!
That *pleaſure* I ſhall then I fear
As ill as now my *ſorrow* bear;
And could then any Chance my life deſtroy,
I ſhould I fear then *dye again* with *Joy*.

The

The Defiance.

I.

WEll *Fortune*, now (if e're you've ſhewn
What *you* had in *your* power to do,
My *wandring* love at length had *fix'd* on *one*,
One who might pleaſe even *unconſtant you*.
Me of this one you have deprived
On whom I *ſtay'd* my Soul, *in* whom I *lived*,
You've ſhewn *your* power, and I reſign,
But now I'll ſhew thee *Fortune*, what's in *mine*.

II.

I will not, no I will not grieve,
My tears within their banks ſhall ſtand,
Do what thou wilt, I am reſolv'd to *Live*,
Since *thee* I can't, I will my *ſelf* command.
I will my paſſions ſo controul
That neither *they*, nor *thou* ſhalt hurt my *Soul*,
I'll run ſo *counter* to thy will,
Thy *good* I'll reliſh, but not feel thy *Ill*.

III.

I *felt* the ſhaft that *laſt* was ſent,
But now thy *Quiver* I defy.
I fear no *Pain* from thee or *Diſcontent*,
Clad in the *Armour* of *Philoſophy*.
Thy *laſt* ſeiz'd on me out of guard,
Unarm'd too far within thy reach I *dar'd*,
But now the *field* I'll *dearly* ſell,
I'm now (at leaſt by *thee*) *Impaſſible*.

IV. My

IV.

My Soul now ſoars high and ſublime
Beyond the *Spring* of thy *beſt* bow,
Like thoſe who ſo *long* on high mountains climb
Till they ſee *rain*, and *thunder* hear *below*.
In vain thou'lt ſpend thy darts on me,
My Fort's too ſtrong for thy Artillery,
Thy *cloſeſt aim* won't touch my mind,
Here's all thy gain, ſtill to be thought *more blind*.

Superſtition.

I.

I Care not tho it be
By the *preciſer* ſort thought *Popery*,
We Poets, can a *Licence* ſhew
For every thing we do,
Hear then my little Saint, I'll *pray* to thee.

II.

If now thy happy mind
Amidſt its various joys can leaſure find
T' attend to any thing ſo low
As what I ſay or do,
Regard, and be what thou waſt ever, *kind*.

III.

Let not the Bleſt above
Engroſs thee quite, but ſometimes hither rove,
Fain would I thy ſweet image ſee
And ſit, and talk with thee,
Nor is it *Curioſity* but *Love*.

IV. Ah

IV.

Ah what delight 'twou'd be
Would'ſt thou ſometimes by ſtealth converſe with me!
How ſhould I thy ſweet commerce prize
And other joys deſpiſe!
Come then, I ne'r was yet *denyed* by thee.

V.

I would not long detain
Thy Soul from Bliſs, nor keep thee here in pain.
Nor ſhould thy fellow-Saints ere know
Of thy eſcape below,
Before thou'rt miſs'd, thou ſhould'ſt return again.

VI.

Sure heaven muſt needs thy love
As well as other qualitys improve.
Come then and recreate my ſight
With rays of thy pure light,
'Twill chear my eyes more than the lamps above.

VII.

But if Fate's ſo ſevere
As to confine thee to thy bliſsfull Sphere,
(And by thy abſence I ſhall know
Whether thy ſtate be ſo)
Live happy, but be mindful of me there.

The complaint of Adam turn'd out of Paradiſe.

I.

And muſt I go, and muſt I be no more
The Tenant of this happy ground?
Can no *reſerves* of pity me reſtore,
Can no *attonement* for my ſtay *compound*?
All the rich Odours that *here grow* I'd give
To Heaven in incenſe, might I here but live.
Or if it be a grace too high
To *live* in Eden, let me there but *dye*.

II.

Fair place, thy ſweets I juſt began to know,
And muſt I leave thee now again?
Ah why does Heaven ſuch *short-lived* Bliſs beſtow?
A *taſt* of *pleaſure*, but *full* draught of *pain*.
I ask not to be *chief* in this bleſt ſtate,
Let Heaven ſome other for that place create.
So 'tis in *Eden*, let me but have
An *under-gardener's* place, 'tis all I crave.

III.

But 'twill not do I ſee, I muſt away,
My feet profane this ſacred ground;
Stay then bright Miniſter, one minute ſtay,
Let me in Eden take one *farewell* round.
Let me go gather but one fragrant bough
Which as a *Relique* I may *keep* and *ſhew*,

Fear

Fear not the *Tree* of *Life*; it were
A Curſe to be *immortal*, and not *here*.

IV.

'Tis done; Now farewell thou moſt happy place,
Farewell ye ſtreams that ſoftly creep,
I ne'r again in you ſhall view my face,
Farewell ye Bowers, in you I ne'r ſhall ſleep.
Farewell ye trees, ye flow'ry beds farewell,
You ne'r will bleſs my *taſt*, nor *you* my *ſmell*.
Farewell thou Guardian divine,
To thee my *happy Rival* I reſign.

V.

O whither now, whither ſhall I repair
Exil'd from this Angelic coaſt?
There's nothing left that's pleaſant, good or fair,
The *world* can't recompence for *Eden* loſt.
'Tis true I've here a univerſal ſway,
The Creatures me as their chief Lord obey,
But yet the world tho *all* my Seat,
Can't make me *happy*, tho it make me *great*.

VI.

Had I loſt *leſſer* and but *ſeeming* Bliſs,
Reaſon my ſorrows might relieve.
But when the loſs great and ſubſtantial is,
To *think* is but to ſee good cauſe to *grieve*.
'Tis well I'm *mortal*, 'tis well I ſhortly muſt
Loſe all the *thoughts* of *Eden* in the duſt.
Senſeleſs and thoughtleſs now I'd be,
I'd loſe even my *ſelf*, ſince I've loſt *thee*.

To Sleep.

I.

BReak off thy ſlumber gentle god
And hither bring thy *charming* rod
The rod that weeping eyes does cloſe
And gives to melancholy hearts repoſe,
With *that* my temples ſtroke, and let me be
Held by thy *ſoft Captivity.*
But do not *all* my ſenſes bind,
Nor *fetter* up too *cloſe* my mind,
Let *mimic* Fancy wake, and freely rove,
And bring th' *Idea* of the Saint I love.

II.

Her lovely image has been brought
So often to my *waking* thought
That 'tis at length worn out and dead,
And with its fair Original is fled.
Or elſe my working overthoughtful mind
With much *intention* is made *blind,*
Like thoſe who look on Objects bright
So long till they quite loſe their ſight.
Ah Cruel Fates, is't not enough for you
To take my *Saint*, but I muſt loſe her *Image* too?

III.

Thee gentle *Charmer* I implore
This my *loſt Treaſure* to reſtore,
Thy *magic* vertues all apply,
Set up again my *Bank-rupt* memory.
Search every *Cell* and corner of my brain,
And bring my *Fugitive* again.

To thy dark cave thy ſelf betake
And 'mong thy *Dreams* enquiry make,
Summon thy *beſt Ideas* to appear
And bring that *Form* which moſt reſembles *her*.

IV.

But if in all thy ſtore there be
None (as I fear) ſo fair as ſhe,
Then let thy *Painter Fancy* limn
Her Form *anew*, and ſend it by a Dream.
Thou can'ſt him all her lively Features tell
For ſure I think thou knew'ſt her well.
But if *deſcription* wont ſuffice
For him to draw a Piece ſo *nice*,
Then let him to my *Breaſt* and *Heart* repair,
For ſure her *Image* is not *worn out there*.

The Grant.

I.

'TWas when the *Tide* of the *returning* day
Began to chaſe ill forms away,
When pious dreams the ſenſe imploy,
And all within is *Innocence* and *Joy*,
My melancholy, thoughtful mind
O'recome at length to ſleep reſign'd;
Not common ſleep, for I was bleſt
With ſomething more *divine*, more *ſweet* than *reſt*.

II.

She who her fine-wrought clay had lately left,
Of whoſe ſweet *form* I was bereft,
Was by *kind* Fancy to me brought,
And made the Object of my *happy* thought.

Clad ſhe was all in virgin white,
And ſhone with *Empyreal* light,
A radiant *glory* crown'd her head,
She ſtream'd with *Light* and *Love*, and thus ſhe ſaid,

III.

And why this grief and Paſſion for the *Bleſt*?
Let all your ſorrows with me *reſt*.
My ſtate is Bliſs, but I ſhould live
Yet much more happy, would you ceaſe to grieve.
Dry up your tears (Dear Friend) and be
Happy in *my* Felicity.
By this your *wiſdom* you'l approve,
Nay (what you'd moſt of all commend) your *Love*.

IV.

She ſpake, diſſolv'd I lay and overcome,
And was with extaſy ſtruck dumb,
But ah the fierce tumultuous joy
Its own weak being *haſtned* to deſtroy.
To ſee that lovely Form appear
My ſpirits in ſuch commotion were,
Sleep could no more their force controul,
They ſhook their fetters off, & free'd my *unwilling* Soul.

V.

What Bliſs do we oft to *Deluſion* owe!
Who would not ſtill be *cheated* ſo?
Opinion's an Ingredient
That goes ſo far to make up true content,
That even a *Dream* of Happineſs
With *real* joy the Soul does bleſs,
Let me but always *dream* of this,
And I will envy none their *waking* Bliſs.

The Aſpiration.

I.

HOw long great God, how long muſt I
Immured in this dark Priſon lye?
Where at the Grates and Avenues of *ſenſe*
My Soul muſt *watch* to have *intelligence.*
Where but faint gleams of thee ſalute my ſight,
Like *doubtful* Moonſhine in a *Cloudy* night.
When ſhall I leave this magic Sphere,
And be all mind, all eye, all ear!

II.

How Cold this Clime! and yet my ſenſe
Perceives even *here* thy influence.
Even here thy ſtrong Magnetic charms I feel,
And pant and tremble like the *Amorous* ſteel.
To lower good and Beautys leſs Divine
Sometimes my *erroneous Needle* does decline
But yet (*ſo* ſtrong the *ſympathy*)
It *turns*, and *points* again to thee.

III.

I long to ſee this Excellence
Which at ſuch *diſtance* ſtrikes my ſenſe.
My impatient Soul ſtruggles to diſengage
Her wings from the confinement of her cage.
Wouldſt thou *great Love* this Priſoner once ſet free
How would ſhe *haſten* to be *linkt* to thee!
She'd for no Angels conduct ſtay,
But fly, and love on all the way.

The Defence.

I.

THat I am colder in my Friendſhip grown
My Faith and Conſtancy you blame,
But ſure th' inconſtancy is all your own,
I am, but *you* are not the ſame.
The flame of love muſt needs expire
If you ſubſtract what ſhould maintain the fire.

II.

While to the Laws of Vertue you were true
You had, and might retain my heart,
Now give me leave to turn Apoſtate too,
Since you do from your ſelf depart.
Thus the *Reform'd* are counted free
From *Schiſm*, tho they deſert the *Roman* See.

III.

The ſtricteſt union to be found below
Is that which Soul and Body tyes,
They all the *Myſterys* of Friendſhip know
And with each other ſympathize.
And yet the Soul will bid adieu
T' her *much diſtemper'd* mate, as I leave you.

The

The Retractation.

I.

I'Ve often charg'd all ſublunary bliſs
With vanity and emptineſs.
You woods and ſtreams have heard me oft complain
How all things, how even *your* delights were vain.
Methought I could with one ſhort ſimple view
Glance o're all human joys, and ſee them through.
But now great *Preacher* pardon me,
I cannot wholly to thy charge agree,
For *Muſic* ſure and *Friendſhip* have no *vanity*.

II.

No, each of theſe is a firm *maſſy* joy
Which tho eternal will not cloy.
Here may the *Venturous* Soul love on, and find
Graſp what ſhe can, that more remains behind.
Such *Depths* of joy theſe living *ſprings* contain
As man t' eternity can never *drain*.
Theſe Sweets the *truth* of Heaven prove,
Only there's *greater* Bliſs with Saints above
Becauſe they've *better Muſic* there, and *firmer love*.

The Prospect.

I.

WHat a strange *moment* will *that* be
My Soul, how full of Curiosity,
When winged, and ready for thy eternal flight
To th' utmost edges of thy tottering Clay
Hovering and wishing longer stay
Thou shalt advance, and have *Eternity* in *sight*!
When just about to try that unknown Sea,
What a strange *moment* will *that* be!

II.

But yet how much *more* strange that state
When loosen'd from th' embrace of this close mate
Thou shalt at *once* be *plunged* in liberty,
And move as swift and active as a Ray
Shot from the lucid *spring* of day,
Thou who just now wast clogg'd with dull mortality,
How wilt thou bear the mighty change, how know
Whether thou'rt then the *same* or no!

III.

Then to strange Mansions of the air
And stranger Company must thou repair:
What a new Scene of things will then appear!
This world thou by *degrees* wast taught to know
Which *lessen'd* thy surprise below,
But Knowledge all at *once* will *overflow* thee *there*.
That world as the *first* man did *this*, thou'lt see,
Ripe-grown, in full maturity.

IV. There

IV.

There with bright Splendours muſt thou dwell,
And be — what onely thoſe pure Forms can tell.
There muſt thou live a while, gaze and admire,
Till the great Angel's Trump this fabric ſhake
And all the ſlumbering Dead awake,
Then to thy old, forgotten ſtate muſt thou retire.
This union then will ſeem as ſtrange or more
Than thy new Liberty before.

V.

Now for the greateſt Change prepare,
To ſee the only Great, the only Fair.
Veil now thy feeble eyes, gaze and be bleſt;
Here all thy turns and Revolutions ceaſe,
Here's all ſerenity and peace,
Thou'rt to the *Center* come, the native ſeat of *reſt*.
There's now no further change, nor need there be,
When *One* ſhall be *Variety*.

The Return.

I.

DEar Contemplation my divineſt Joy,
When I thy ſacred Mount aſcend
What Heavenly ſweets my Soul employ!
Why can't I there my days for ever ſpend?
When I have conquer'd thy ſteep Heights with Pain
What pity 'tis that I muſt down again.

II.

And yet I muſt; my Paſſions would rebel
Should I too *long* continue here,
No, here I muſt not think to *dwell*,
But mind the Dutys of my proper Sphere.
So Angels, tho they Heaven's glorys know,
Forget not to attend their Charge below.

The 137 Pſalm Paraphraſed to the 7 Verſe.

I.

Beneath a reverend gloomy ſhade
Where *Tigris* and *Euphrates* cut their way,
With folded arms and heads ſupinely laid
We ſate, and wept out all the tedious day,
Within its Banks grief could not be
Contain'd, when, *Sion*, we remember'd thee.

II.

Our Harps with which we oft had ſung
In ſolemn ſtrains the great Jehovah's praiſe,
Our warbling Harps upon the Trees we hung,
Too deep our grief to hear their pleaſing Layes.
Our Harps were ſad, as well as we
And tho by Angels toucht would yield no Harmony.

III.

But they who forc'd us from our ſeat
The Happy Land, and ſweet abode of Reſt,
Had one way left to be more cruel yet
And ask'd a Song from hearts with grief oppreſt.

Let's

Let's hear, ſay they, upon the Lyre
One of the *Anthems* of your *Hebrew Quire.*

IV.

How can we frame our voice to ſing
The Hymns of Joy, Feſtivity and Praiſe
To thoſe who're aliens to *our Heavenly* king,
And want a *taſt* for ſuch exalted Layes.
Our Harps will here refuſe to ſound,
An *Holy Song* is due to *Holy ground.*

V.

No, deareſt *Sion*, if we can
So far forget thy melancholy ſtate
As now thou mourn'ſt, to ſing one chearful ſtrain,
This ill be added to our *Ebb* of Fate.
Let neither Harp nor Voice e're try,
One *Hallelujah* more, but ever ſilent lye.

The 139 *Pſalm Paraphraſed to the* 14 *Verſe.*

I.

IN vain, great God, in vain I try
T'eſcape thy quick all-ſearching eye.
Thou with one *undivided* view
Doſt look the whole Creation through.
The unſhap'd *Embryo's* of my mind
Not yet to Form or likeneſs wrought,
The tender *rudiments* of thought
Thou ſee'ſt, before ſhe can her own *Conception* find.

II. My

II.

My Private walks to thee are known,
In *Solitude* I'm not *alone*;
Thou round my bed a guard doſt keep,
Thy eyes are open, while mine ſleep.
My ſofteſt whiſpers reach thy ear.
'Tis vain to fancy ſecrecy;
Which way ſo e're I turn thou'rt there,
I am all round *beſet* with thy *Immenſity*.

III.

I can't wade through this Depth, I find,
It drowns and ſwallows up my mind.
'Tis like thy immenſe Deity,
I cannot fathom that, or thee.
Where then ſhall I a refuge find
From thy bright comprehenſive eye?
Whither, O whither ſhall I fly,
What place is not poſſeſt by thy all-filling mind?

IV.

If to the heavenly Orbs I fly,
There is thy Seat of Majeſty.
If down to Hell's Abyſs I go
There I am ſure to meet thee too.
Should I with the ſwift wings of Light
Seek ſome remote and unknown land,
Thou ſoon wouldſt overtake my flight,
And all my Motions rule with thy *long-reaching* hand.

V.

Should I t' avoid thy piercing ſight,
Retire behind the skreen of night,
Thou canſt with one celeſtial ray
Diſpel the ſhades, and make it day.

Nor

Nor need'ſt thou by ſuch Mediums ſee,
The force of thy clear, radiant ſight
Depends not on our groſſer light,
On Light thou ſitt'ſt *enthroned*, 'tis *ever* Day with *thee*.

VI.

The *Springs* which Life and Motion give
Are thine, by thee I move and live.
My Frame has nothing hid from thee,
Thou know'ſt my whole *Anatomy*.
T' an Hymn of Praiſe I'l tune my Lyre;
How amazing is this work of thine!
With *dread* I into my *ſelf* retire,
For tho the *Metal's baſe*, the *Stamp* is all *divine*.

To Dr. Plot *on his Natural Hiſtory of* Stafford-ſhire.

I.

WHat ſtrange Perverſity is this of Man!
When 'twas a *Crime* to taſt th' *inlightning* Tree
He could not *then* his hand refrain
None then ſo *inquiſitive*, ſo Curious as He.
But now he has *Liberty* to try and know
God's whole *Plantation* below,
Now the Angelic fruit may be
Taſted by all whoſe arms can *reach* the Tree,
H'is now by *Licence careleſs* made,
The *Tree* neglects to *climb*, and *ſleeps* beneath the *ſhade*.

II.

Such drowſy *ſedentary* Souls have they
Who could to *Patriarchal* years live on
Fix'd to *Hereditary* Clay
And know no Climate but their *own*.

Contracted

Contracted to their narrow Sphere
Reſt before *Knowledg* they prefer,
And of this globe wherein they dwell
No more than of the Heavenly Orbs can tell.
As if by Nature plac'd below
Not on this Earth to *dwell*, but to take *root* and *grow*.

III.

Dull Souls, why did great Nature take ſuch care
To write in ſuch a *Splendid* character.
If Man the only thing below
That can pretend her hand to know
Her fair-writ Volumn does deſpiſe,
And tho deſign'd for *Wiſdom* won't be *wiſe*?
Th' Almighty gets no *Praiſe* from this dull kind,
The Sun was never worſhip'd by the *Blind*.
Such Ignorance can ne'r *Devotion* raiſe,
They will want *Wiſdom*, and their Maker *Praiſe*.

IV.

They only can this Tribute *duely* yield
Whoſe active Spirits range abroad
Who traverſe o're all Natures field
And view the great Magnificence of God.
They ſee the hidden wealth of Nature's ſtore
Fall down, and *Learnedly* adore,
But They *moſt* juſtly yet this Tribute pay
Who don't *Contemplate* only, but *diſplay*
Comment on Nature's Text, and to the ſenſe
Expoſe her latent excellence,
Who like the Sun not only *travel* o're
The world, but give it *light* that *others* may adore.

V.

In th' Head of theſe *Heroic Few*
Our Learned Author firſt appears in view,

Whoſe

Whoſe ſearching genius like the Lamp of day
Does the Earth's Furniture diſplay,
Nor ſuffers to lye bury'd and unknown
Nature's rich Talent or his *own*.
Drake and *Columbus* do in thee revive,
And we from thy *Reſearch* as much receive.
Thou art as great as they, for 'tis all one
New Worlds to *find*, or *nicely* to *deſcribe* the *known*.

VI.

On Mighty Hero, our whole Iſle ſurvey,
Advance thy Standard, conquer all the way.
Let nothing but the *Sea* controul
The progreſs of thy active Soul.
Act like a pious Courteous *ghoſt*
And to mankind retrieve what's *loſt*.
With thy victorious charitable hand
Point out the hidden *Treaſures* of our Land.
Envy or *Ignorance* do what they will,
Thou haſt a *Bleſſing* from the *Muſes Hill*.
Great be thy Spirit as thy Work's divine,
Shew *thou* thy *Maker's* Praiſe, we *Poets* will ſing *thine*.

The Exchange.

I.

WHen *Corydon* had loſt his Liberty
And felt the Tyrant's heavy chain;
He ſwore, could he but once get free
He'd never, no, he'd never love again.

II.

But ſtay dull ſhepherd, if you *quench* your fire,
Too *dear* you'l buy your *Liberty*:
Let not ſuch vigorous heats *expire*,
I'l teach thee how to *love*, and yet be *free*,

III.

Take bright *Urania* to thy Amorous breaſt,
To her thy *flaming* heart reſign;
Void not the *room*, but change the *gueſt*,
And let thy *ſenſual* love commence *Divine*.

IV.

The Swain obey'd, and when he once had known
This *fore-taſt* of the joys above,
He vow'd, tho he *might* be his own,
Yet he would ever, yes, he'd ever love.

The Refinement.

I.

WEll, 'twas a hard Decree of Fate,
My Soul, to *Clip* thy *pinions* ſo,
To make thee leave thy pure Ethereal ſtate
And breathe the Vapours of this Sphere below,
Where he that can pretend to have
Moſt Freedom, 's ſtill his *body*'s ſlave.

II.

Was e're a Subſtance ſo divine
With ſuch an unlike Conſort joyn'd?
Did ever things ſo wide, ſo cloſe combine
As maſſy Clods and Sun-beams, Earth and mind?
When yet two *Souls* can ne'r agree
In *Friendſhip*, but by *parity*.

III.

Unequal match! what wilt thou do,
My Soul, to raiſe thy *Plumes* again?
How wilt thou this groſs vehicle ſubdue,
And thy firſt Bliſs, firſt Purity obtain?
Thy Conſort how wilt thou refine,
And be again *all o're* divine?

IV.

Fix on the Soveraign Fair thy eye,
And kindle in thy breaſt a flame,
Wind up thy Paſſions to a pitch ſo high
Till they melt down, and rarify thy frame.
Like the great *Prophet* then aſpire,
Thy *Chariot* will like *his*, be *Fire*.

To Melancholy.

I.

MYſterious Paſſion, *deareſt* Pain, (theſe
Tell me, what wondrous Charms are
With which thou doſt *torment* and *pleaſe*,
I *grieve* to be thy *ſlave*, yet would not *Freedom* gain.
No Tyranny like thine we know,
That half ſo cruel e're appear'd,
And yet thou'rt *Loved* as well as *Fear'd*,
Perhaps the *only Tyrant* that is ſo.

II.

Long have I been thy Votary,
Thou'ſt led me out to woods and groves,
Made ſt me deſpiſe all other Loves,
And give up all my *Paſſions*, all my *Soul* to thee.
Thee for my *firſt* Companion did I chuſe
Firſt, even before my *darling Muſe*,
And yet I know of thee no more
Than thoſe who never did thy ſhrine adore.

III.

Thou'rt Myſtery and Riddle all,
Like thoſe thou inſpireſt, thou lov'ſt to be
In *darkneſs* and *obſcurity*,
Even learned *Athens* thee an *unknown God* might call.
Strange contrarys in thee combine,
Both *Hell* and *Heaven* in thee meet
Thou greateſt bitter, greeteſt ſweet,
No *Pain* is like *thy* Pain, no *Pleaſure* too like *thine*.

IV. 'Tis

IV.

'Tis the *grave* doctrine of the Schools
That Contrarys can never be
Conſiſtent in the *high'ſt* degree, (Rules,
But thou muſt ſtand exempt from their dull narrow
And yet 'tis ſaid the brighteſt mind
Is that which is by thee refined.
See here a *greater* Myſtery;
Thou makeſt us *wiſe*, yet *ruin'ſt* our *Philoſophy*.

The Diſcontent.

I.

NOt that it is not made my Fate
To ſtand upon the dangerous heights of ſtate,
Nor that I cannot be poſſeſt
Of th' hidden treaſures of the Eaſt,
Nor that I cannot bathe in Pleaſures Spring
And rifle all the ſweets which Natures gardens bring
Do I repine, my Deſtiny,
I can all theſe *deſpiſe* as well as you *deny*.

II.

It ſhall not diſcompoſe my mind
Though not one ſtar above to me prove kind.
Their influence may ſway the *Sea*,
But make not the leaſt change in *me*.
They neither can *afflict* my ſtate, nor *bleſs*,
Their greateſt *gifts* are *ſmall*, and my *deſires* are *leſs*.
My Veſſel bears but little *ſail*,
What need I then a full and ſwelling *gale*.

III.

And yet I'm diſcontented too,
Perhaps ye aſpiring Souls as much as *you*,
We both in equal trouble live,
But for much different *Cauſes* grieve.
You, that theſe gilded joys you can't *obtain*,
And I, becauſe I know they're *empty* all and *vain*.
You ſtill *purſue* in hopes to *find*,
I ſtand, and dare not *flatter* on my mind.

IV.

This *Tree* of *Knowledg* is, I ſee,
Still *fatal* to poor man's *felicity*.
That which yields others great repaſt,
Can't pleaſe my now *enlightn'd* taſt.
Before, tho I could nothing *ſolid* find,
Yet ſtill with ſpecious *Proſpects* I could *pleaſe* my mind.
Now all at farthеſt I can ſee
Is one perpetual *Round* of Vanity.

Beauty.

Beauty.

I.

BEſt Object of the Paſſion *moſt* divine
What excellence can Nature ſhew
In all her various ſtore *below*
Whoſe Charms may be compar'd to thine?
Even *Light* it ſelf is therefore fair
Only becauſe it makes *thy* Sweets appear.

II.

Thou ſtreaming Splendour of the face divine
What in the Regions *above*
Do Saints like thee adore or love,
What excellence is *there* like thine?
I except not the *Divinity*
That great and Soveraign good, for thou art *He*.

III.

He's Beauty's vaſt Abyſs and boundleſs Sea,
The Primitive and greateſt Fair,
All his Perfections *Beauty*'s are,
Beauty is all the Deity.
Some ſtreams from this vaſt Ocean flow,
And that is all that *pleaſes*, all that's *Fair* below.

IV.

Divine Perfection who alone art all
That various *Scene* of Excellence
Which pleaſes either *mind* or *ſenſe*,
Tho thee by different names we call!

Search Nature through, thou ſtill wilt be
The *Sum* of all that's *good* in her *Variety*.

V.

Love that moſt active Paſſion of the mind,
Whoſe roving Flame does traverſe o're
All Nature's good, and reach for more,
Still to thy *magic Sphere's* confined.
'Tis *Beauty* all we can deſire,
Beauty's the *native Manſion* of Love's *Fire*.

VI.

Thoſe Finer Spirits who from the Croud retire
To ſtudy Nature's artful Scheme,
Or ſpeculate a Theorem,
What is't but *Beauty* they admire?
And they too who enamour'd are
Of *Vertues* face, love her becauſe ſhe's *Fair*.

VII.

No empire, Soveraign Beauty, is like thine,
Thou reign'ſt *unrivall'd* and *alone*,
And *univerſal* is thy throne,
Stoics themſelves to thee reſign.
From Paſſions be they ne're ſo free
Something they needs muſt love, and that is *Thee*.

VIII.

He whom we all adore, that mighty He,
Owns thy ſupream dominion,
And happy lives in thee alone,
We're bleſt *in him*, and He *in thee*;
In thee he's *infinitely* bleſt,
Thou art the *immoſt Center* of his *Reſt*,

IX. Pleas'd

IX.

Pleas'd with thy Form which in his eſſence ſhin'd
Th' Almighty choſe to multiply
This *Flower* of his Divinity
And leſſer Beautys ſoon deſign'd.
The unform'd Chaos he remov'd,
Tinctured the Maſſe with *thee*, and then it *lov'd*.

X.

But do not thou My Soul, fixt here remain,
All Streams of Beauty here below
Do from that immenſe Ocean flow,
And thither they ſhould lead *again*.
Trace then theſe Streams, till thou ſhall be
At length *o'rewhelm'd* in Beauty's *boundleſs Sea*.

Love.

I.

IMperial Paſſion! Sacred fire!
When we of *meaner* Subjects ſing,
Thou tune'ſt our Harps, thou doſt our Souls inſpire,
'Tis *Love* directs the Quill, 'tis *Love* ſtrikes every ſtring.
But where's *another* Deity
T' inſpire the man that ſings of *thee*?

II.

W' are by miſtaken *Chymiſts* told
That the moſt active part of all
The various *Compound* caſt in nature's *mould*
Is that which they *Mercurial ſpirit* call.
But ſure 'tis *Love* they ſhould have ſaid,
Without this even *their Spirit* is *Dead*.

III.

Love's the great *Spring* of Nature's *wheel*,
Love does the Maſſe pervade and move,
What 'ſcapes the *Sun*'s, does *thy* warm influence feel,
The Univerſe is kept in tune by Love.
Thou Nature giv'ſt her *Sympathy*,
The *Center* has its *Charm* from thee.

IV.

Love did great *Nothing*'s barren womb
Impregnate with his genial fire,
From this firſt Parent did all creatures come,
Th' Almighty *will'd*, and made all by *Deſire*.

Nay more, among the Sacred *Three*,
The *third ſubſiſtence* is from *thee*.

V.

The Happieſt Order of the Bleſt
Are thoſe whoſe *Tide* of *Love's* moſt *high*,
The bright *Seraphic* Hoſt; who're more poſſeſt
Of good, becauſe more like the Deity.
T' him they advance as they improve
Their noble *heat*, for *God is love*.

VI.

Shall then a Paſſion ſo Divine
Stoop down and *Mortal* Beauty's know?
Nature's great Statute Law did ne're deſign
That *Heavenly* fire ſhould kindle here *below*,
Let it aſcend and dwell above,
The proper *Element* of Love.

The Consummation.

A

Pindarique Ode.

I.

THe rise of Monarchys, and their *long*, *weighty* fall
My Muse outsoars; she proudly leaves behind
The Pomps of Courts, she leaves our little *All*,
To be the *humble* Song of a less reaching Mind.
In vain I curb her tow'ring flight;
All I can here present 's too small.
She presses on, and now has lost their sight,
She flies, and hastens to relate
The last and dreadful Scene of Fate,
Nature's great solemn Funeral.
I see the mighty Angel stand
Cloath'd with a Cloud, and Rain-bow round his head,
His right foot on the Sea, his other on the Land,
He lifted up his dreadful arm, and thus he said:
By the mysterious great Three-one
Whose Power we fear, and Truth adore
I swear the Fatal Thred is spun,
Nature shall breath her last, and *Time shall be no more.*
The Antient Stager of the Day
Has run his minutes out, and number'd all his way.
The parting *Isthmus* is thrown down
And all shall now be overflown.
Time shall no more her *under-current* know
But one with great Eternity shall grow,
Their streams shall *mix*, and in *one Circling* chanel flow.

II.

He ſpake. Fate writ the Sentence with her Iron pen,
And mighty Thunderings ſaid, *Amen.*
What dreadful ſound's this ſtrikes my ear?
'Tis ſure th' Arch-angel's trump I hear
Nature's great Paſſing-bell, the *only* Call
Of God's that will be heard by *all.*
The Univerſe takes the alarm, the Sea
Trembles at the great Angel's ſound
And roars almoſt as loud as he,
Seeks a new channel, and would fain run under-ground.
The Earth it ſelf does no leſs quake
And all throughout, down to the Center ſhake,
The Graves uncloſe, and the deep ſleepers there awake.
The Sun's *arreſted* in his way,
He dares not forward go,
But wondring ſtands at the great hurry here below.
The Stars forget their laws, and like looſe Planets ſtray.
See how the Elements reſign
Their numerous charge, the ſcatter'd Atoms home repair
Some from the Earth, ſome from the Sea, ſome from the (Air:
They know the great alarm,
And in confus'd mixt numbers ſwarm,
Till rang'd, and ſever'd by the *Chymiſtry* divine.
The Father of Mankind's amaz'd to ſee
The Globe too narrow for his Progeny.
But 'tis the *cloſing* of the Age,
And *all* the *Actors* now at once muſt grace the *Stage.*

III.

Now Muſe exalt thy wing, be bold and dare,
Fate does a wondrous Scene prepare,
The *Central* fire which hitherto did burn
Dull like a Lamp in a moiſt clammy Urn,

Fann'd

Fann'd by the breath divine begins to glow,
The Fiends are all amaz'd below.
But that will no confinement know
Breaks through its Sacred Fence, and plays more free
Than thou with all thy vaſt *Pindarique* Liberty.
Nature does ſick of a ſtrong *Fever* lye.
The fire the ſubterraneous Vaults does ſpoil;
The Mountains ſweat, the Sea does boil;
The Sea, her mighty *Pulſe*, beats high.
The waves of fire more proudly rowl;
The Fiends in their deep Caverns howl,
And with the frightful Trumpet mix their hideous cry.
Now is the Tragic Scene begun;
The Fire in triumph marches on; (Sun.
The Earth's girt round with flames, and ſeems another

IV.

But whither does this lawleſs Judgment roam?
Muſt *all* promiſcuouſly expire
A Sacrifice in *Sodom*'s fire?
Read thy Commiſſion, *Fate*; ſure *all* are not thy due,
No, thou muſt ſave the vertuous Few.
But where's the Angel guardian to avert the doom?
Lo, with a mighty Hoſt he's come.
I ſee the parted Clouds give way.
I ſee the Banner of the Croſs diſplay.
Death's Conquerour in pomp appears,
In his right hand a Palm he bears,
And in his looks Redemption wears,
Th' illuſtrious glory of this Scene
Does the deſpairing Saints inſpire
With Joy, with Rapture and deſire;
Kindles the *higher* life that *dormant* lay within.
Th' awaken'd vertue does its ſtrength diſplay
Melts and refines their droſſy Clay;

New-

New-caſt into a pure Æthereal frame
They fly and mount aloft in vehicles of flame.
Slack here my Muſe thy roving wing
And now the world's *entuned*, let down thy *high-ſtrung*.

Freedom.

I.

I Do not ask thee Fate to give
This little ſpan a *long* reprieve.
Thy pleaſures here are all ſo poor and vain,
I care not hence how ſoon I'm gone.
Date as thou wilt my time, I ſhan't complain;
May I but ſtill live *free*, and call it all my *own*.

II.

Let my ſand ſlide away apace,
I care not, ſo I *hold* the *glaſs*.
Let me my *Time*, my *Books*, my *Self* enjoy.
Give me from cares a ſure retreat;
Let no impertinence my hours employ.
That's in one word, kind Heaven, let me ne're be *great*.

III.

In vain from *chains* and *fetters* free
The *great* man boaſts of *Liberty*.
He's *pinnion'd* up by formal rules of ſtate;
Can ne're from noiſe and duſt retire;
He's haunted ſtill by Crouds that round him wait,
His lot's to be in *Pain*, as that of *Fools* t' *admire*.

IV.

Mean while the *Swain* has calm repoſe,
Freely *he* comes and freely goes.

Thus

Thus the bright Stars whose station is more *high*
Are *fix'd*, and by *strict measures* move,
While *lower* Planets *wanton* in the sky,
Are bound to no *set* laws, but *humoursomly* rove.

To his Muse.

I.

COme Muse, let's cast up our Accounts, and see
How much you are in *Debt* to me;
You've reign'd thus long the Mistress of my heart
You've been the ruling *Planet* of my days,
In my spare-hours you've had your part,
Ev'n *now* my servile hand your soveraign will obeys.
Too *great* such service to be *Free*,
Tell me what I'm to *have* for being thy *Votary*,

II.

You have *Preferments* in your *gift* you say,
You can with *gold* my service pay;
I fear thy boast, your sacred Hill I'm told
In a *poor*, *curs'd*, and *barren* Country lies,
Besides what's *state* to *me*, or *gold*,
These *you* long since have taught me to *despise*.
To put me off with this would be
Not to *reward*, but tax my ill *Proficiency*.

III.

But *Fame* you say will make amends for all,
This you your soveraign Blessing call,
The only *lasting* good that never *dies*,
A good which never can be bought *too dear*,
Which all the wise and vertuous prize,
The *gods* too with delight their *Praises* hear.

This

This ſhall my Portion be you ſay,
You'l crown my head with an *immortal Bay*.

IV.

Give me a place leſs high, and more ſecure,
This *dangerous* good I can't *endure*.
The peaceful banks which profound *ſilence* keep
The little Boat *ſecurely* paſſes by,
But where with *noiſe* the waters creep
Turn off with Care, for treacherous rocks are nigh.
Then Muſe farewell, I ſee your ſtore
Can't pay for what is *paſt*, and I can *truſt* no more.

Of

Of the advantages of Thinking.

MAN being the only Creature here below design'd for a ſociable life, has two facultys to diſtinguiſh him from other Créatures, *Thinking* and *Speaking*. The one, to fit him for the ſociety of others; and the other, to qualify him alſo for his own. As to the latter of theſe Facultys, there's no fear of its gathering ruſt for want of uſe. We are rather apt to ſpeak too much; and the moſt Reſerv'd have reaſon to pray with the Pſalmiſt, *Set a watch O Lord before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips.*

But the former, is that which generally lies *fallow* and neglected; as may be gueſs'd from the intemperate uſe of the other. There are few indeed, that are *capable* of thinking to any great purpoſe: but among thoſe that *are*, there are fewer that *employ* this excellent Talent. And for ought I know, however ſtrange it may ſeem, among the Ingenious and well educated there are as few *Thinkers* as among the Herd of the vulgar and illiterate. For either they live a *Popular* life; and then what for buſineſs, pleaſures, Company, viſits, with a world of other impertinencys, there's ſcarce

room for ſo much as a Morning reflexion. Or elſe, they live *retir'd*, and then either they doze away their time in drowſineſs and brown ſtudys; or, if brisk and active, they lay themſelves out wholely upon devouring books and making Common places, and ſcarce entertain their Solitude with a Meditation once in a Moon.

But 'tis merely for want of Thinking that they can allow themſelves in doing ſo. For by a little of this, they would ſoon diſcover that of all the Methods of improvement that can be uſed, there is none ſo advantagious as Thinking; either for our Intellectuals or our Morals; to make us wiſer, or to make us better. And firſt, for our Intellectuals. 'Tis the perfection of our Rational part to *know*; that is, to be able to frame clear and diſtinct conceptions, to form right Judgments, and to draw true conſequences from one thing to another. Now beſides that the Powers of the mind are made more bright, vigorous, and active by uſe, as all other facultys are; there is this further advantage, that by habitual thinking the object is made more familiar to the underſtanding, the Habitudes and relations of Ideas one towards another, by frequent comparing, become more viſible and apparent; and conſequently, 'tis more eaſy to divide what ought to be divided, and to compound what ought to be compounded; wherein conſiſts the

ſum

ſum of all *Truth* and *Science*.

Reading is indeed very excellent and *uſeful* to this purpoſe; but Thinking is *neceſſary*. This may do without the other, as appears in the firſt Inventors of Arts and Sciences; who were fain to think out their way to the Receſſes of Truth; but the other can never do, without this. Reading without thinking, may indeed make a rich *Common place*, but 'twill never make a rich *head*; it may, indeed, bring in a great ſtore of *Hyle*, but 'tis yet *without form* and *void*, till Thinking, like the Seminal ſpirit, agitates the dead ſhapeleſs lump, and works it up into figure and ſymmetry.

But of what advantage Thinking is to the advancement of Knowledge, will further appear by conſidering ſome of the chief impediments of it; and how they are removed by Thinking. And the firſt that I ſhall mention, is the Prejudice of Infancy. We form infinite raſh judgments of things, before we duly underſtand any thing; and theſe grow up with us, take root, ſpread and multiply; till, after long uſe and cuſtom, we miſtake them for common notions and dictates of nature; and then we think it a crime to go about to unlearn or eradicate them. And as long as we ſtand thus affected, we are condemn'd to errours and perpetual wandrings. So great reaſon had the excellent *Des-Cartes* to lay the foundation of his Philoſophy in an *Equipoiſe* of mind; and

to make the removal of these Prejudices the very entrance and beginning of wisdom.

But now when a man sets upon a course of Thinking, nothing will be so obvious as to consider, that since we come so late to the perfect use of our reason; among those many judgments we have made, 'tis very likely the major part are false and erroneous. And this is a fair step to the shaking off those infant-Prejudices; at least he will be thereby induc'd not to believe any thing the rather, because he had given it such early entertainment. From this general reflexion he proceeds to examin the things themselves. And *now* he is a capable Judge, can hear both sides with an indifferent ear, is determin'd only by the moments of truth; and so retracts his *past* errours, and has the best Moral security against any for the *future*.

Another great hindrance to knowledg is the wrong *perception* of things. When the simple Ideas of our minds are confus'd, our Judgments can never proceed without errour. 'Tis like a fault in the first concoction, which is never corrected in either of the other. For how can I judge whether the Attribute agree to the subject, if my notion of both be *confus'd* and *obscure?* But now, the only cause of the confusedness of our notions, next to the natural inability of our faculties, is want of *Attention* and close *application* of mind. We don't *dwell* enough upon the object; but speculate it transiently

ſiently and in haſt; and then, no wonder that we conceive it by halves. Thinking therefore is a proper Remedy for this defect alſo.

Another great hindrance to knowledg is *ambiguity of Terms and Phraſes*. This has bred a world of confuſion and miſunderſtanding, eſpecially in controverſys of Religion; a great many of which, if thoroughly ſifted and well compared, will be found to be mere *verbal* contentions. As may appear from what the excellent Monſieur *Le Blanc* has perform'd in this kind. But now, this is owing merely to want of thinking. There is a latitude in the Phraſe; and one writer not ſufficiently attending to that determinate ſenſe of it which his Adverſary intends, very haſtily and furiouſly denys what the other does not affirm; and he again as furiouſly affirms what this does not deny. So that they are really agreed all along, and yet fight on like Fools in the dark. And there is no hopes they will ever be reconciled, till either they will take the pains to think themſelves, or ſome body elſe will be ſo kind, as to think for 'em.

Another great hindrance to knowledg is an *over-fond* and *ſuperſtitious deference to Authority*, eſpecially that of *Antiquity*. There is nothing that cramps the Parts, and fetters the underſtandings of men like this ſtrait-lac'd humour. Men are reſolv'd never to outſhoot their forefathers mark; but write one after another,

and ſo the dance goes round in a circle; and the world is never the *wiſer* for being *older*. Take an inſtance of this in the *School-men*, and in the beſt of them, *Aquinas*. 'Tis pleaſant to ſee how that great Wit is oftentimes put to't to maintain ſome unlucky Authorities, for the ſalving of which he is forced to ſuch ſhifts and expedients which he muſt needs (ſhould he dare to think freely) ſee through and diſcern to be falſe; and yet ſuch a ſlave was he, that he would rather loſe truth, than go out of the Road to find it. This alſo makes men, otherwiſe ſenſeful and Ingenious, quote ſuch things many times out of an old dull Author, and with a peculiar emphaſis of commendation too, as would never paſs even in ordinary converſation; and which they themſelves would never have took notice of, had not ſuch an Author ſaid it. But now, no ſooner does a man give himſelf leave to think, but he perceives how abſurd and unreaſonable 'tis, that one man ſhould preſcribe to all Poſterity: that men, like beaſts, ſhould follow the foremoſt of the Herd; and that venerable *non-ſenſe* ſhould be prefer'd before *new-ſenſe*: He conſiders, that that which we call *Antiquity*, is properly the nonage of the world; that the ſageſt of his Authoritys were once new; and that there is no other difference between an antient Author and himſelf, but only that of time; which, if of any advantage, 'tis rather on his ſide, as living in a more refined

fined and mature age of the world. And thus having caſt off this *Intellectual* ſlavery, like one of the brave Ελλινοι, mention'd by *Laertius*, he addicts himſelf to no Author, Sect or Party; but freely picks up Truth where-ever he can find it; puts to Sea upon his own bottom; holds the Stern himſelf; and now, if ever, we may expect new diſcoverys.

There are other notable impediments to the improvement of knowledg, ſuch as Paſſion, Intereſt, fear of being tax'd with inconſtancy, ſcorn of being inform'd by another, Envy, the humour of Contradiction, and ſometimes Flattery in applauding every thing we hear, and the like. Now as to the manner how all theſe are remov'd by thinking, it may ſuffice to ſay in general, that they are all obviouſly abſurd and ridiculous; and however unthinking men may be abuſed by them, yet a free and cloſe Thinker muſt needs quickly perceive that they are ſo: and there is no better Moral way that I know of to be quit of ill habits, than the being convinc'd of their Folly and Miſchief.

But the greateſt advantage of thinking is yet behind, that it improves our Morals as well as our Intellectuals; and ſerves to make us Better, as well as Wiſer. This is in a great meaſure included in the other. All therefore that I ſhall further remark concerning it is this, that conſidering the great influence the underſtanding has upon the will, there are but two

things neceſſary to preſerve us in our duty. Firſt an habitual Theory of what we ought and ought not to do; and of all the motives and engagements to the one and to the other. Secondly an actual and clear preſence of all this to the mind, in every Inſtant of action. And this is for the moſt part the thinking man's condition. He does not only Habitually *know*, but actually *attends* both to his Duty, and to all the engagements for its performance. He has thoſe Conſiderations almoſt always preſent with him which to others are the Principles of *Repentance*; and this keeps him *in* his Duty, which brings others *to* it; and makes him live like thoſe *Righteous* perſons of whom our Saviour ſays, that they *need no Repentance*.

Of

Of the Care and Improvement of Time.

TO be careful how we manage and employ our Time, is one of the *firſt* Precepts that is *taught* in the School of Wiſdom, and one of the *laſt* that is *learn'd*. The firſt and *leading* dictate of Prudence is, That a Man propoſe to himſelf his true and beſt intereſt for his End; and the next is, That he make uſe of all thoſe means and opportunities whereby that end is to be attain'd. And betwixt theſe two there is ſuch a cloſe connexion, that he who does not *do* the *latter*, cannot be ſuppoſed to *intend* the *former*. He that is not careful of his actions, ſhall never perſwade me that he ſeriouſly propoſes to himſelf his beſt intereſt, as his *end*, for if he did, he would as ſeriouſly apply himſelf to the regulation of the *other* as the *means*. And ſo he that is not careful of his Time, cannot in reaſon be ſuppoſed to be careful of his Actions; for if he were, he would certainly have a ſpecial regard to the *opportunity* of their performance.

But, as I obſerv'd in the beginning, though this Precept be one of the *Elementary* dictates of Prudence, and ſtands written in the *firſt page* of

of the *Book of Wiſdom*; yet ſuch is the ſottiſhneſs and ſtupidity of the World, that there is none that is more *ſlowly learn'd*. And 'tis a prodigious thing to conſider, that, although among all the *Talents* which are committed to our *Stewardſhip*, Time upon ſeveral accounts is the moſt precious, yet there is not any one of which the generality of men are more profuſe and regardleſs. Tho it be a thing of that ineſtimable value, that 'tis not diſtributed to us *intirely*, and at once, like other Bleſſings, but is *dealt* out in minutes and little parcels, as if man were not fit to be truſted with the *intire* poſſeſſion of ſuch a *choice* Treaſure, yet there are very many that think themſelves ſo *overſtock'd* with it, that inſtead of *husbanding* it to advantage, the main buſineſs of their thoughts is how to rid their hands of it, and accordingly they catch at every ſhadow and opportunity of *relief*; ſtrike in at a venture with the next Companion, and ſo the *dead Commodity* be *taken off*, care not who be the *Chapman*. Nay, 'tis obvious to obſerve, that even thoſe perſons who are frugal and thrifty in every thing elſe, are yet extremely prodigal of their beſt *Revenue*, Time; *Of which alone* (as *Seneca* neatly obſerves) *'tis a Vertue to be Covetous.*

Neither may this Cenſure be faſtned only upon the *unthinking* multitude, the *Sphere* of whoſe Conſideration is ſuppoſed to be very *narrow*,

row, and their Apprehenſion *ſhort-ſighted*; but I obſerve that many of thoſe who ſet up for Wits, and pretend to a more than ordinary ſagacity, and delicacy of Senſe, do notwithſtanding ſpend their Time very *unaccountably*, and live away whole days, weeks, and ſometimes months together, to as little purpoſe (tho it may be not ſo innocently) as if they had been aſleep all the while. And this they are ſo far from being aſhamed to own, that they freely boaſt of it, and pride themſelves in it, thinking that it tends to their Reputation, and commends the greatneſs of their Parts, that they can *ſupport* themſelves upon the Natural *ſtock*, without being beholden to the *Intereſt* that is brought in by Study and Induſtry.

But if their Parts be ſo good as they would have others believe, ſure they are *worth* improving; if not, they have the more *need* of it. And tho it be an Argument of a *rich* mind, to be able to *maintain* it ſelf without *labour*, and *ſubſiſt* without the *advantages* of Study, yet there is no man that has ſuch a portion of Senſe, but will underſtand the uſe of his Time better than to put it to the trial. Greatneſs of Parts is ſo far from being a diſcharge from *Induſtry*, that I find Men of the moſt exquiſite Senſe in all Ages were always moſt curious of their Time: Nay, the moſt Intelligent of all Created Beings (who may be allow'd to paſs a truer eſtimate upon things than the fineſt Mortal

Mortal Wit) value Time at a high rate. *Let me go* (ſays the Angel to the importunate Patriarch) *for the day breaketh.* And therefore I very much ſuſpect the excellency of thoſe mens Parts, who are diſſolute and careleſs miſ-ſpenders of their Time: For if they were men of *any thoughts*, how is it poſſible but theſe ſhould be ſome in the number? (*viz.*) 'That this Life is 'wholly in order to another, and that Time is 'that *ſole opportunity* that God has given us for 'tranſacting the great buſineſs of Eternity: 'That our work is great, and our day of work-'ing ſhort, much of which alſo is loſt and ren-'der'd uſeleſs, thrpugh the cloudineſs and dark-'neſs of the *Morning*, and the thick vapours 'and unwholeſome foggs of the *Evening*; the 'ignorance and inadvertency of *Youth*, and the 'Diſeaſes and Infirmities of *Old Age*: That our 'portion of Time is not only ſhort, as to its du-'ration, but alſo uncertain in the poſſeſſion: 'That the loſs of it is irreparable to the loſer, 'and profitable to no body elſe: That it ſhall 'be ſeverely accounted for at the great Judg-'ment, and lamented in a ſad Eternity.

He that conſiders theſe things (and ſure he muſt needs be a *very unthinking* man that does not) will certainly be choice of his Time, and look upon it no longer as a bare ſtate of *duration*, but as an *Opportunity*; and conſequently will let no part of it (no *conſiderable* part at leaſt) ſlip away either *unobſerv'd* or *unimprov'd*. This

is

is the moſt effectual way that I know of to ſecure to ones ſelf the *Character* of a Wiſe-man *here*, and the *reward* of one *hereafter*. Whereas the *vain Enthuſiaſtic* Pretenders to the *Gift* of Wit, that trifle away their Time, betray the *ſhallowneſs* and *poverty* of their Senſe to the *diſcerning few*; or whatever they may paſs for here among their fellow Mortals, do moſt infallibly make themſelves *cheap* in the ſight of *Angels*.

Of

Of Solitude.

IT has been urg'd as an Objection, by ſome *Atheiſtical* Perſons, againſt the exiſtence of a God, that if there had been ſuch a perfect Being, who was *compleatly* happy in the enjoyment of himſelf, he would never have gone about to make a World. Now, tho this Objection contributes nothing to the ſupport of Atheiſm (the deſign of God in Creating the World being not to *increaſe* his happineſs, but to *Communicate* it) yet it proceeds upon this true ſuppoſition, That *Society* is a *Bleſſing*. It is ſo, and that not only *reſpectively*, and in reference to the preſent circumſtances of the World, and the Neceſſities of this Life, but alſo *ſimply*, and in its own Nature; ſince it ſhall be an *Acceſſory* to our bliſs in Heaven, and add many *moments* to the *weight* of *Glory*. Neither will the truth of this aſſertion be at all weaken'd by alledging that no benefit or advantage accrues to God by it, for that it becomes unbeneficial to him (tho a Bleſſing in its own nature) is purely by accident, becauſe God eminently containing in himſelf all *poſſible* good, is uncapable of any *New* Acceſſion.

And as Society is in its own nature an inſtrument of Happineſs, ſo is it made much more ſo by

by the indigencies and infirmities of Men. Man, of all Creatures in the World, is leaſt qualify'd to live alone, becauſe there is no Creature that has ſo many neceſſities to be reliev'd. And this I take to be one of the great *Arts* of Providence, to ſecure mutual amity and the *reciprocation* of good turns in the World, it being the Nature of Indigency, like common danger, to indear men to one another, and make them herd together, like *Fellow-Sailors* in a *Storm*. And this indeed is the true caſe of Mankind, we all Sail in one *bottom*, and in a *rough* Sea, and ſtand in need of one anothers help at every turn, both for the *Neceſſities* and *Refreſhments* of Life. And therefore I am very far from commending the undertaking of thoſe *Aſcetics*, that out of a pretence of keeping themſelves *unſpotted from the World*, take up their quarters in *Deſarts*, and utterly abandon all Human Society. This is in ſhort (to ſay no more of it) to put themſelves into an incapacity either of *doing* any good to the World, or of receiving any from it: and certainly that can be no deſirable ſtate. No, this *Eremetical* way of Living is utterly inconſiſtent with the Circumſtances and Inclinations of Human Nature; he muſt be a God, *Self-ſufficient* and *Independent* that is fit for this ſtate of abſolute and perfect Solitude, and in this *rigorous* ſenſe, *It is not good for man* (tho in *Paradice* it ſelf) *to be alone*.

But

But tho Society, as 'tis oppoſed to a ſtate of perfect and perpetual Solitude, be a Bleſſing, yet conſidering how little of it there is in the World that is *good*, I think it adviſable for every man that has ſenſe and thoughts enough, to be his own Companion, (for certainly there is more required to qualifie a man for his *own* company than for *other* men's) to be as frequent in his Retirements as he can, and to communicate as little with the World as is conſiſtent with the duty of doing good, and the diſcharge of the common offices of Humanity. 'Tis true indeed (as *Seneca* ſays) *Miſcendæ & alternandæ ſunt Solitudo & frequentia: Solitude and Company are to have their turns, and to be interplaced.* But Wiſe-men uſe to dedicate the largeſt ſhare of their Lives to the former, and let the *beſt* and *moſt* of their Time go to make up the *Canonical Hours* of Study, Meditation and Devotion. And for this, beſides the practice of Wiſe-men, we have the *Authentic* example of our B. Lord himſelf, Who, as 'tis reaſonably ſuppoſed (for he had paſs'd the thirtieth year of his Life before he enter'd upon the ſtage of Action, and then alſo ſought all opportunities to be alone, and oftentimes purchas'd Retirement at the expence of Night-watches) allotted the greateſt part of his little Time here on Earth to Privacy and Retirement; and 'tis highly probable, would have liv'd much more reſervedly, had not the peculiar buſineſs of his function

function made it neceſſary for him to be converſant in the World. The inclination of our Lord lay more toward the *Contemplative* way of Life, tho the intereſt of Mankind engaged him oftentimes upon the *Active*. And 'tis very obſervable, that there is ſcarce any one thing which he vouchſafed to grace with ſo many marks and inſtances of favour and reſpect as he did Solitude. Which are thus ſumm'd up by the excellent Pen of a very great Maſter of Learning and Language; *It was Solitude and Retirement in which Jeſus kept his Vigils; the deſart plates heard him pray, in a privacy he was born, in the Wilderneſs he fed his thouſands, upon a Mountain apart he was transfigured, upon a Mountain he died, and from a Mountain he aſcended to his Father. In which Retirements his Devotion certainly did receive the advantage of convenient circumſtances, and himſelf in ſuch diſpoſitions twice had the opportunities of Glory.* The Great Exemplar.

Indeed, the *Satisfactions* and *Advantages* of Solitude (to a perſon that knows how to improve it) are very great, and far tranſcending thoſe of a *Secular* and *Popular* Life. Firſt, as to Pleaſure and Satisfaction, whoſoever conſiders the great variety of mens humours, the peeviſhneſs of ſome, the pride and conceitedneſs of others, and the impertinence of moſt; he that conſiders what unreaſonable *terms of Communion* ſome perſons impoſe upon thoſe

that partake of their Society; how rare 'tis for a man to light upon a Company, where, as his first Salutation, he shall not presently have a Bottle thrust to his Nose; he, I say, that considers these and a thousand more grievances, wherewith the *folly* and *ill nature* of men have conspired to *burthen* Society, will find, take one time with another, Company is an occasion of almost as much *displeasure* as *pleasure*. Whereas in the mean time the Solitary and Contemplative man sits as safe in his Retirement as one of *Homer's Heroes* in a Cloud, and has this only trouble from the follies and extravagancies of men, that he *pitties* them. He does not, it may be, laugh so loud, but he is better *pleas'd*: He is not perhaps so often *merry*, but neither is he so often *disgusted*; he lives to himself and God, full of Serenity and Content.

And as the *Pleasures* and *Satisfactions* of Solitude exceed those of a Popular Life, so also do the *Advantages*. Of these there are two sorts, *Moral* and *Intellectual*; to both which Solitude is a *particular* friend. As to the first, it is plain that Solitude is the proper opportunity of Contemplation, which is both the *Foundation* and the *Perfection* of a Religious Life. *It is* (as the same excellent Person forecited says elsewhere of a single Life) *the huge advantage of Religion, the great opportunity for the Retirements of Devotion, which being empty of Cares is full*

full of Prayers, being unmingled with the World it apt to converse with God; and by not feeling the warmth of a too forward and indulgent Nature, flames out with holy Fires, till it be burning like the Cherubim and the most extasy'd Order of holy and unpolluted Spirits. And for this reason 'twas that the Ancients chose to build their Altars and Temples in Groves and Solitary Recesses, thereby intimating, that Solitude was the best opportunity of Religion.

Neither are our *intellectual* advantages less indebted to Solitude. And here, tho I have in a great measure anticipated this consideration (there being nothing necessarily required to compleat the Character of a Wise-man, besides the knowledg of God and himself) yet I shall not confine my self to this instance, but deduce the matter further, and venture to affirm that all kinds of *Speculative* knowledg as well as *practical*, are best improved by Solitude. Indeed there is much talk about the great benefit of keeping Great men company, and thereupon 'tis usually reckon'd among the *disadvantages* of a *Country* life, that those of that condition want the opportunities of a *Learned Conversation*. But to confess the truth, I think there is not so much in it as people generally imagine. Indeed, were the Souls of men lodg'd in *transparent cases*, that we might read their thoughts; would they *communicate* what they know, were it the fashion to discourse learned-

ly, 'twere worth while to frequent the *Cabals* of Great men: But when it ſhall be counted a piece of *errant Pedantry*, and defect of good breeding to ſtart any Queſtion of Learning in Company; when every man is as ſhy of his Notions as of a *Fairy-treaſure*; and makes his Head not a Repoſitory or *Exchequer* of Knowledg, but a *Grave* to bury it in: A man may be a conſtant attendant at the *Conclaves* of Learned men all his life long, and yet be no more the wiſer for't than a *Book-worm* is for dwelling in *Libraries*. And therefore, to ſpeak ingeniouſly, I don't ſee for my part wherein the great advantage of great Converſation lies, as the humours of men are pleas'd to order it. Were I to inform my ſelf in buſineſs, and the management of affairs, I would ſooner talk with a plain illiterate Farmer or Trades-man than the greateſt *Vertuoſo* of *The Society*; and as for Learning (which is the only thing they are ſuppoſed able to diſcourſe well of) *that* in point of *Civility* they decline: So that I find I muſt take refuge at my Study at laſt, and there *redeem* the Time that I have *loſt* among the *Learned*.

Of

Of Courage.

ARiſtotle in his Morals begins the Doctrine of Vertues with *Courage*; which has found work for his Interpreters to aſſign the reaſon of his method. But, methinks, there is no great need they ſhould either *ſtudy* or *differ* much about it. For certainly, among all the Vertues this will juſtly challenge the *Precedency*, and is the moſt *Cardinal* and fundamental part of Morality. This Vertue is pre-required to the *ſuſception* of all the reſt. For the very entrance into the School of wiſdom and a vertuous courſe is a ſtate of Diſcipline, Difficulty and Hardſhip. And therefore 'tis *ſapere aude*, a great piece of *daring* and boldneſs to ſet up for a good man: eſpecially, if to the proper difficulties and Agonies of a Vertuous engagement, we add thoſe calamities and ſtraits it oftentimes expoſes us to, through the malice and folly of the world. So that as *Plato* writ upon his School Ἀγεωμέτρητος οὐδεὶς εἰσίτω *Let none enter here that underſtands not Mathematics*, it may be ſet as a *Motto* upon the School of Vertue, *Let none enter here that wants Courage.*

And as 'tis neceſſarily requiſite to the *ſuſception* of all other vertues, ſo is it their main *ſupport*, *guardian* and *eſtabliſhment*. Without

 this,

this, every other Vertue is precarious, and lies at the mercy of every croſs accident. Without this, let but a Piſtol be held to the breaſt, and the ſevereſt Chaſtity will be frighted into compliance, the moſt Heroic Friendſhip into treachery, and the moſt ardent Piety into renunciation of God and Religion. There is nothing among all the frailneſſes and uncertaintys of this ſublunary world ſo tottering and unſtable, as the vertue of a Coward. He has that within him that upon occaſion will infallibly betray every vertue he has; and to ſecure him from ſin, you muſt keep him from Temptation. This was the Principle the Devil went upon in his encounter with *Job*, *Do but put forth thy hand,* (ſays he to God) *and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.* He was right enough in the *Propoſition*, tho miſtaken in the *application.*

Having now ſeen the uſefulneſs of this great Vertue, twill be worth while to enquire a little into its Nature. And that the rather, becauſe 'tis not only variouſly and falſly apprehended by *the many*, but too confuſedly and darkly deliver'd even by Moraliſts themſelves.

That which with the Vulgar paſſes for Courage, is certainly nothing elſe but ſtupidity, deſperateneſs or fool-hardineſs; a brutiſh ſort of *Knight-errantry* in ſeeking out needleſs encounters, and running into dangers without fear or wit; which is ſo far from having the fore-

fore-mention'd property of Courage, of being a guardian, and ſecurity of our Vertues, that 'tis in it ſelf a ſin.

But are we like to have a better account of it from the Moraliſts? why they tell you that it is a Mediocrity between Fear and Boldneſs; So *Ariſtotle* in his Ethics. But then as for defining what this Mediocrity is (wherein the very point of the buſineſs lies) you are as much to ſeek as ever.

Others will tell you that 'tis a firmneſs of mind in ſuſtaining evils, and undertaking dangers. Accordingly they aſſign two parts of Courage *Suſtinere & Aggredi*. Thus *Epictetus* and the School of the Stoics. But what it is thus firmly to ſuſtain or undertake an evil, and what evils are to be thus ſuſtain'd or undertaken, they either could not, or have not thought fit to acquaint us.

In order therefore to the ſettling the Point in hand, I conſider 1ſt in general, that Courage has evil of Pain for its object, which in ſome circumſtances is to be choſen or ſubmitted to. Whence I form this general Idea of Courage that 'tis a firm and peremptory reſolution of Mind to chuſe evil of Pain in right circumſtances, or when 'tis truly eligible. This Definition I confeſs runs in general Terms, much like one of *Ariſtotles*, but I intended it for no other. Only it has this advantage above his, that it lays a Foundation for one that is more particular.

For 'tis but here to ſubjoin when an evil is truly eligible, and the Idea of Courage will be ſufficiently determinate and expreſs. Now to make a thing eligible 'tis neceſſary that ſome way or other it appear good; evil being no way eligible under its own formality. And to make an evil put on the nature and appearance of good, two things are neceſſary. 1ſt that it be a leſſer evil than ſome other, and 2ly that the chuſing of it be a neceſſary Medium for the preventing of that other. Then, and in no other caſe, is evil truly eligible: and conſequently, we ſhall not be miſtaken in the Idea of Courage, if we define it to be ſuch a firm and conſtant ἕξις or diſpoſition of mind, whereby a man is fix'd and determin'd never to dread any evil, ſo far as to decline it when the chuſing it is the only remedy againſt a greater. And this is moſt eminently ſignalized in the caſe of Martyrdom, when a man ſubmits to the greateſt evils of Pain to avoid that much greater one of Sin. This is the very ſummity and perfection of Courage, that which an *Hannibal* or a *Scipio* could never equal in all their gallantry and feats of war: and I dare venture to pronounce, that he who would rather dye or part with any worldly intereſt than commit a ſin, can never be a Coward.

And here I cannot but take notice of a falſe notion of Honour and Courage whereby the world has been generally abuſed; eſpecially thoſe

thoſe men that make the higheſt pretenſions to both. According to theſe mens Meaſures of things, 'tis ſufficient reaſon to poſt a man up for a Coward if he refuſe a Duell; And to merit a badge of Honour from the Herald's Office if he accept it. Theſe men would be ready to laugh at me, I know, as a lover of Paradoxes, ſhould I tell them that their characters muſt be quite tranſpoſed to make them true. And yet I cannot help it, ſo it falls out that he who declines the Duell is indeed the man of Honour and Courage, and he who accepts it is the Coward. For he who declines it, deſpiſes the obloquy and ſcorn of the world that he may approve himſelf to God and his own Conſcience, would rather be pointed and hiſs'd at, than be damn'd; and ſo chuſes a leſſer evil to avoid a greater. But he that accepts the Duel, ſo dreads the loſs of his credit among thoſe whoſe good opinion is of no value, that to avoid it he chuſes to incur ſin and damnation; and ſo chuſes a greater evil to avoid a leſs. And if this be Courage, we muſt ſtrike it out of the Catalogue of the Vertues, for nothing is ſo, that is not under the direction of *Prudence*; much leſs what is down-right Folly and the very *exaltation* of Madneſs.

Of

Of Seriouſneſs.

SInce I began to conſider ſo far as to make Reflections upon *my ſelf*, the moſt early and prevailing diſpoſition which I obſerv'd was an Inclination to *Seriouſneſs*, and ſince I conſider'd the nature of *things* and the circumſtances of Human life, I found I had reaſon to thank the kind influence of my birth for making that my *Temper*, which otherwiſe I muſt have been at more coſt to *acquire*.

For tho it be generally reckon'd only as a *Semi-vertue*, and by ſome as no vertue at all, yet certainly nothing is of greater advantage both as to Intellectual and Moral attainments than to be of a ſerious, compoſed and recollected ſpirit. If it be not it ſelf a vertue, 'tis at leaſt the *Soil* wherein it naturally grows, and the moſt viſible mark whereby to know thoſe that have it. This is that whereby a *Man* is chiefly diſtinguiſh'd from a *Child*, and a *Wiſe* man from a *Fool*. For (as the Son of *Si-*
Eccleſ. 19. *rac* obſerves) *a man may be known by his look, and one that has underſtanding by his countenance when thou meet'ſt him.* And again ſpeaking of levity and diſſoluteneſs of behaviour, *A man's attire, exceſs of laughter and gaiety ſhew what he is*, that is, it ſhews he is none of the

the *wiſeſt*. And that this was his true meaning we may be aſſured from another Character of his, where he expreſly makes the ſigns of wiſdom and folly to conſiſt in theſe two propertys, (*viz.*) that *a Fool lifts up his voice with laughter, but a Wiſe man does ſcarce ſmile a little*. Eccluſ. 21.

There is indeed a near Relation between Serioufneſs and Wiſdom, and one is a moſt excellent Friend to the other. A man of a ſerious ſedate and conſiderate temper as he is always in a ready diſpoſition for Meditation (the beſt improvement both of knowledg and manners) ſo he thinks without diſturbance, enters not upon another Notion till he is maſter of the firſt, and ſo makes *clean work* with it. Whereas a man of a looſe, volatile and ſhatter'd humour thinks only by fits, and ſtarts now and then in a *Morning interval*, when the ſerious mood comes upon him, and even then too let but the leaſt trifle croſs his way, and his deſultorious fancy preſently takes the *Scent*, leaves the unfiniſh'd and *half-mangled* notion, and skips away in purſuit of the new *game*. So that altho he *conceives* often, yet by ſome chance or other he always *miſcarrys*, and the iſſue proves *Abortive*.

Indeed nothing excellent can be done without Serioufneſs, and he that *courts* wiſdom muſt be in *earneſt*. St *James* aſſures us that 'tis to no purpoſe for a *wavering* and *unſtable* man Jap. 1. v. 7.

to

to *pray*, becauſe he ſhall be ſure not to *ſpeed*. And as 'tis in vain for ſuch a one to *Pray*, ſo is it in vain for him to *ſtudy*. For a man to pretend to work out a neat ſcheme of thoughts with a magotty unſettled head, is as ridiculous and non-ſenſical as to think to write *ſtreight* in a jumbling Coach, or to draw an exact Picture with a *Palſy* hand. No, he that will *hit* what he *aims* at muſt have a ſteddy hand as well as a quick eye, and he that will think to any *purpoſe*, muſt have fix'dneſs and compoſedneſs of humour, as well as ſmartneſs of parts.

And accordingly we find that thoſe among the Philoſophic Sects that profeſs'd more than ordinary eminency in wiſdom or vertue, aſſumed alſo a peculiar gravity of Habit, and ſolemnity of Behaviour, and the moſt ſacred and myſterious rites of Religion were uſually perform'd with *ſilence*; and that not only for *decency*, but for *advantage*. Thus the *Italians* who are the graveſt are alſo the moſt ingenious people under heaven, and 'tis a known obſervation of *Ariſtotle*'s concerning *melancholy*, that it furthers Contemplation and makes great Wits. Thus again the *Diſcipline* of *Silence* was a conſiderable part of the *Pythagoric* inſtitution, and we have it ſtoried of our B. Lord himſelf who was the *wiſdom* of his father, that he never *laugh'd*.

But becauſe a ſolemn deportment may ſometimes diſguiſe an unthinking mind, and *grave*

in

in ſome men's Dictionarys ſignifies the ſame as *Dull*, I ſhall put the Character a little more home, and define more cloſely wherein the true Idea of Seriouſneſs conſiſts, or what it is to be in good earneſt a *ſerious man*.

And 1ſt I ſhall remove it from the neighborhood of thoſe things which by their ſymbolizing with it in outward appearance prove oftentimes the occaſion of miſtake and confuſion. It does not therefore conſiſt in the morofity of a *Cynic*, nor in the ſeverity of an *Aſcetic*, nor in the demureneſs of a *Preciſian*, nor in the deadneſs and ſullenneſs of a *Quaker*, nor in the ſolemn meen of an *Italian*, nor in the ſlow pace of a *Spaniard*; 'Tis neither in a drooping head, nor a mortify'd face, nor a Primitive Beard.

'Tis ſomthing very different and much more excellent than all this that muſt make up a ſerious man. And I believe I ſhall not miſrepreſent him if I ſay he is one that duly and impartially weighs the moments of things ſo as neither to value Trifles, nor deſpiſe things really excellent. That dwells much at *home* and ſtudys to know himſelf as well as Books or men; 'that conſiders why he came into the world, 'how great his buſineſs and how ſhort his ſtay 'in it, how uncertain 'tis when he ſhall leave it, 'and whither a ſinner ſhall then betake him-'ſelf when both Heaven and Earth ſhall Rev. 20. 'fly from the preſence of the Judg. That con-'ſiders God as always preſent, and the Folly

'of

'of doing what muſt be repented of, and of go-
'ing to *Hell* when a man *may* go to *Heaven*. In
'one word, that knows how to diſtinguiſh be-
'tween a moment and eternity.

This is to be truly *ſerious*, and however the Pretenders to gaiety and lightſomneſs of Humour may miſcall and ridicule it by the names of Melancholy, dullneſs and ſtupidity *&c.* He that is thus affected cannot miſs of being wiſe and good here, and happy hereafter. And then 'twill be *his* turn to *laugh*, when the others ſhall *mourn* and *weep*.

Of the ſlightneſs of all Secular, and the importance of minding our Eternal, Intereſt.

IDleneſs and Impertinence, a doing of *nothing* or of *nothing* to the *purpoſe*, are always ſigns of a vain, looſe, and inconſiderate ſpirit, but they are never *more* ſo, than when there is ſome very momentous and weighty buſineſs to be done. The man that ſleeps away his happy *Retirements*, or with the *Roman* Emperor ſpends them in killing flies, betrays a great deal of weakneſs and incogitancy, but ſhould he do the ſame at the *Bar*, when he's to plead for his *life*, he would certainly be thought a mere *changeling* or mad-man.

And yet this I fear will prove the caſe of the moſt of thoſe who ſtile themſelves *Rational*. For beſides that the generality of men live at random, without any aim or deſign at all, and thoſe that propoſe ſome ends ſeldom take up with any that are important and material, or if they do, they ſeldom proportion their *care* to the *weight* of things, but are ſerious in trifles, and trifling in things ſerious, I ſay beſides all this, there is nothing relating purely to *this* world

world that can deſerve the name of *Buſineſs*, or be worth the ſerious thoughts of him who has an immortal Soul, and a Salvation to work out with *fear* and *trembling*. The greateſt ſecular affairs and intereſts are but *Specious Trifles*, and all our deſigns and employments about 'em *Excentrical* Motions, and ſolemn impertinencies.

And yet this is made the *Center* of all our ſtudys and endeavours, the great *Bent* of the world points this way, hence are taken the meaſures of *Wiſdom* and *Prudence*, and Religion it ſelf is forced to truckle to worldly Policy. Whereas in the mean time there is an *Affair* of grand importance, and wherein all mankind are deeply concern'd, and ſuch as really deſerves all that care and ſolicitude, which we laviſh away upon other things, and infinitely more (tho perhaps it might be ſecured with *leſs*) and yet this is the thing which by *many* is utterly *neglected*, by the *moſt* is *leaſt* cared for, and by none *ſufficiently* regarded. So that conſidering the general practice of the world, I think there are very few in it to whom that will not be a very proper and ſeaſonable admonition, which our B. Lord gave to his ſollicitous and overbuſy Diſciple, *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful.*

To cure therefore (if poſſible) this great folly, I have two Propoſitions to offer; 1ſt that no intereſt

intereſt relating purely to this preſent world is of any great moment or concern to man, aly that to be very careful of our final intereſt, and to make ſure to our ſelves a happy eternity is indeed a thing of vaſt moment and importance.

The firſt of theſe I know will ſeem very ſtrange and paradoxical to one that takes a proſpect of mankind, and contemplates the great ſtirr and hurry of the world, the Plottings of Stateſmen, the Emulations of Courtiers, and the Ambition of Princes, how buſy men are in their ſeveral concerns, what variety of deſigns are on foot, with what *trembling* eagerneſs they are proſecuted, and what grief attends our diſappointments. Sure after ſuch a *Scene* as this one would be tempted to think, that there muſt be ſomthing very *conſiderable* in Human life, and that men had *notable* intereſts here at ſtake, it being a reproach to human nature that the world ſhould ſo generally combine to make ſuch ado about nothing.

But yet that *this is their folly*, not to inſiſt upon 'that univerſal vanity which the wiſe and 'great Trier of the world has charged upon it, 'that *Hope defer'd makes the heart ſick*, Prov. 13. 'and yet Fruition does not cure it, that we are 'diſappointed in our enjoyments as well as in 'our loſſes, and yet that 'tis our hard fate to 'weep at the *Funeral* of our *departed* Pleaſures, 'tho we were little the happier for them when

'we had them; that our greateſt pleaſures are 'moſt tranſient, and great mirth always ends 'in heavineſs and demiſſion of ſpirit, that the 'more we *love* or *enjoy* the more we *venture*, 'and put our ſelves further within the reach of 'Fortune; that the greateſt men are not always 'the moſt contented, and that they who are 'moſt *envy'd* by *others* think themſelves more 'fit for their *Pity*; not to inſiſt I ſay on theſe or the like conſiderations, I ſhall fix only upon one, whereby I think twill plainly appear that there *can* be no intereſt relating purely to this world, that is of any great moment or concern to man. And that is the *ſhortneſs* and *uncertainty* of our abode here.

The life of man in the *Book* of *Wiſdom* is compared to a *ſhadow*. Now beſides that the reſemblance holds in many conſiderable reſpects, as in that it is partly Life and partly Death, as the other is partly Light and partly Darkneſs, in that like a ſhadow whereever it paſſes it leaves no *track* behind it, in that it ſeems to be ſomthing when indeed it is nothing, in that 'tis always altering and ends on a ſuddain, and when at its full height and prime is often neareſt to *Declenſion*, as a ſhadow is to diſappear when at full length, there is yet another inſtance of reſemblance, which has a more particular aptneſs to our preſent purpoſe. The ſhadow can continue no longer at the *utmoſt* than the light of the Sun keeps its reſidence above

the

the *Horizontal* line, which is but a little portion of time, but it may fall much short of that period by the interposition of a cloud, and when that may be is as uncertain as the *weather*, and depends upon a thousand accidents.

And thus 'tis with our *lives*. No man can lengthen out his days beyond that *natural Term* which is set him by the temperament of the first *Qualitys*, which yet are of such jarring and *unsociable* natures that they can't dwell long together in a *vital* amity. But then how far, and how many ways, he may fall short of that compass, depends upon so many hidden causes, and so many little accidents that it may be reckon'd among the greatest of uncertaintys. So that there is nothing in all human life so frail and uncertain as *life* it *self*.

A consideration sufficient to depretiate and vilify all the entertainments and interests of the *Animal* life, and to call off our care from the objects of secular Happiness tho there were no other vanity in them. For were they never so good and solid in *themselves*, yet the Foundation on which they stand is so weak and rotten, that 'tis dangerous leaning *hard* upon them. They would be even upon this supposition like *Nebuchadnezzar*'s statue, made up indeed of *rich metal*, but founded upon *feet* of *clay*. And upon this account they are to be esteem'd as vile and contemptible as they are ruinous.

This is a consideration indeed that has but little effect in the world, and the reason is because few give any serious heed and attention to it. They know it indeed *habitually*, and must confess it if put to the *question*, but it lies *Dormant* in 'em, and they seldom actually attend to it. And therefore 'tis that the voice bids the Prophet *Isaiah*, *Cry* and *proclaim* it *aloud* that *all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field*. He is bid to cry *aloud*, thereby intimating both the *importance* of the *thing*, and the general *stupidity* of men in not considering it.

But if men would but often and seriously meditate upon the shortness and uncertainty of life, I perswade my self they would not set their hearts much upon any thing in it, but would look upon all its Pleasures, Honours and Profits with the same indifferency that the *hasty Traveller* does upon the specious fields and meadows which he passes by. For to what purpose I pray, should man who holds his *Tenement* here by such a short and unstable *Tenure*, that can't live long and *may* dye presently, be so busy and thoughtful about worldly concerns? The ancient *Patriarchs*, tho their span was so very much longer than ours, thought it hardly worth while to build houses, but contented themselves to grow *gray* in *Tents*; and what do we mean who in comparison to them are but ἐφήμερoι (as *Pindar* calls us) people for a *day*, by plunging

our

our ſelves ſo deeply into care and trouble? Is there any thing among the actions of either Brutes or Mad-men ſo ſilly and irrational as this?

But to be a little particular, to what purpoſe ſhould man who walketh in a *vain ſhadow*, *diſquiet* himſelf alſo thus in *vain*, and be ſo greedy in heaping up riches when he can't tell who ſhall gather them? To what purpoſe ſhould a man trouble both the world's and his own reſt to make himſelf *great*? For beſides the emptineſs of the thing, the *Play* will quickly be done, and the *Actors* muſt all retire into a ſtate of *equality*, and then it matters not who perſonated the *Emperor*, or who the *Slave*. To what purpoſe ſhould a man be very earneſt in the perſuit of *Fame*? He muſt ſhortly dye, and ſo muſt thoſe too who admire him. Nay I could almoſt ſay, to what purpoſe ſhould a man lay himſelf out upon *ſtudy*, and drudge ſo laborioufly in the *Mines* of Learning? He's no ſooner a little wiſer than his Brethren, but Death thinks him *ripe* for his *ſickle*, and for ought we know after all his pains and induſtry, in the next world an Ideot or a Mechanic will be as *forward* as he. To what purpoſe laſtly does a Tyrant oppreſs his people, tranſgreſs thoſe bounds which *wiſe* Nature has ſet him, invade his neighbor's Countrys, deprive the innocent and peaceable of their Liberty, ſack Cities, plunder Provinces, depopulate Kingdoms and

almoſt put the foundations of the Earth out of courſe, to what purpoſe is all this? *Thou Fool*, ſays our B. Saviour, *this night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee, and then whoſe ſhall thoſe things be which thou haſt provided?*

There is certainly nothing in all *Nature* ſo ſtrange and unaccountable as the *actions* of ſome men. *They ſee*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *that wiſe men alſo dye and periſh together as well as the ignorant and fooliſh, and leave their riches for others, and yet they think* (at leaſt act as if they did) *that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and that their dwelling places ſhall endure from one generation to another, and call their lands after their own names.*

This they think is their *wiſdom*, but the Pſalmiſt aſſures them 'tis their *fooliſhneſs*, and ſuch a fooliſhneſs too as makes them comparable to the *Beaſts that periſh*, however their *Poſterity* may *praiſe their ſaying*. And certainly the Learned Apoſtle was of the ſame mind, when from this Principle, *The time is ſhort*, he deduces the very ſame concluſion we have hitherto pleaded for, that we ſhould be very indifferent and unconcern'd about any worldly *good* or *evil*, *that they that have wives ſhould be as tho they had none, and they that weep as tho they wept not, they that rejoice as tho they rejoiced not, they that buy as tho they poſſeſt not, and they that uſe this world as not abuſing it, for the faſhion of this world paſſes away*. It does ſo, and for that reaſon there

there is nothing in this life to be very much *lov'd*, or very much *fear'd*, eſpecially if we conſider what a grand intereſt we have all of us at ſtake in the *other* world. For as 'tis with the *ſufferings* ſo is it with the *enjoyments* of this preſent time, they are neither of them *worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed*.

We have ſeen how frivolous and unconcerning the greateſt affairs of this world are, how unworthy to be made the objects of our *ſolicitude*, much more to be the *Buſineſs* of our lives, we have weigh'd them in the *Ballance*, and they are found *wanting*. But man is a Creature of brisk and active faculty's, and is there no employment for him? yes, as God has furniſh'd him with Powers, ſo alſo has he aſſign'd him a work, and ſuch a one too as is to be perform'd with *Fear* and *Trembling*. There is a good fight to be fought, there is a whole Body of ſin to be deſtroy'd, there are Paſſions to be mortify'd, Habits to be unlearnt, Affections to be purify'd, Vertuous and holy diſpoſitions to be acquired, Acts of vertue to be oppoſed againſt Acts of ſin, and Habits againſt Habits, in a word there is a Heaven to be obtain'd, and a Hell to be avoided. This indeed is a great work, and of great concernment to be done, and ſuch as calls for our principal, (I could almoſt ſay our whole) care and diligence. The great neceſſity of which for more diſtinctneſs ſake, I ſhall repreſent in a few Conſiderations.

And 1ſt, it highly concerns us to be very careful concerning our final intereſt, becauſe of the vaſt, the infinite Moment of the thing. For certainly it can be no leſs whether a man ſhall be *Damn'd* or *Saved*, *eternally* Happy, or *eternally* Miſerable. No man certainly that thinks at all, can think this an *indifferent* matter, or if he does he will one day be ſadly convinc'd of the contrary, when he ſhall curſe the day of his Birth, and wiſh for the *Mercy* of *Annihilation*. The loweſt conception we can frame of the condition of the *Damn'd*, is an utter excluſion from the Beatific preſence of God. And tho the non-enjoyment of this be no great puniſhment to *ſenſual* men in this ſtate and Region of *exile*, who perhaps would be content that God ſhould keep Heaven to himſelf, ſo he would let them have the free uſe of the *Earth*, yet hereafter when the Powers of their Souls ſhall be awaken'd to their full vigour and activity, when they ſhall have a lively and thorough apprehenſion of true Happineſs, and of the infinite Beautys of the Supreme good, there will ariſe ſuch a vehement *Thirſt*, ſuch an intenſe longing in the Soul, as will infinitely exceed the moſt exalted languiſhments of *Love*, the higheſt Droughts of a *Fever*. The Soul will then *paint* to the *Center* of Happineſs with her full bent and *verticity*, which yet ſhe ſhall find utterly out of her reach, and ſo full of *Deſire* and full of *Deſpair* ſhe ſhall lament both her *Folly*

and

and her *Miſery* to eternal ages. And who is able to dwell even with *theſe* everlaſting Burnings?

But 2ly as an Argument for our great Care we may conſider, that as the intereſt is great, ſo a more than ordinary care is neceſſary to ſecure it. And that upon ſeveral accounts. 1ſt becauſe our Redemption by Chriſt is not our immediat and actual diſcharge from ſin, (as the *Antinomians* would have it) but only an inſtating us into a *Capacity* of Pardon and Reconciliation, which is to be *actually* obtain'd by the performance of *Conditions*, without which we ſhall be ſo far from being the better for what has been done and ſuffer'd for us, that our Condemnation will be ſo much the heavier for neglecting to *finiſh* ſo great Salvation.

2ly, Becauſe the Conditions of our Salvation tho temper'd with much mercy and accommodation to human infirmity, are yet ſo difficult as to engage us to put forth our whole might to the work. A great part of Chriſtianity is very harſh to Fleſh and Blood, however to the *Habituated* Diſciple Chriſt's *yoke* may be *eaſy* and his *burthen light*. And accordingly the Path that leads to life is call'd *narrow*, and the gate (tho open'd by our Saviour) is yet ſo *ſtrait* that we are bid to *ſtrive* to enter in at it. And *the Righteous ſcarcely are ſav'd*.

Again, becauſe there is a ſtrong confederacy againſt us among the Powers of darkneſs. We have a very potent and malicious enemy, who envys

envys man ſhould arrive to thoſe happy manſions from whence himſelf *by tranſgreſſion fell*; And accordingly, there is a great woe pronounc'd by the Angel againſt the inhabitants of the earth, becauſe the Devil is come down among them having great wrath. And this is made by the Apoſtle himſelf an Argument for more than ordinary care and circumſpection. *Be ſober*, ſays he, *be vigilant, becauſe your adverſary the Devil walks about as a roaring Lion ſeeking whom he may devour.*

Again, becauſe we have but a little time for this our great work, and that too very precarious and uncertain. Our *glaſs* holds but very little *ſand* tho 'twere to be *all* ſpent, and drawn out in the *running*. But there are alſo ſeveral accidental impediments that may *intercept* its paſſage; And therefore as this was alledg'd as an argument for *indifferency* about the things of *this* world, ſo for the ſame reaſon, it concerns us to be eminently careful in the grand buſineſs of the *next*. He that duly conſiders how many perſons dye ſuddainly, how many more *may*, and that none can engage for it that he *himſelf* ſhall not, muſt needs confeſs himſelf extremely concern'd to improve this *ſhort*, this *uncertain* opportunity, this *only* time of Probation, and to work with all his might while 'tis *day*, before the *night come, when no man can work.*

Laſtly, it concerns us to uſe a more than ordinary care and diligence in ſecuring this our

great

great intereſt, becauſe after all our Care and Vigilancy, all our ſtrictneſſes and ſeveritys, we don't know the juſt and preciſe meaſures of *Qualification*, and how much *Trimming* of our *Lamps* is requiſite to fit 'em for the *Sanctuary* of God. For tho we are well aſſured in *general* from the terms of the Evangelical Covenant, that if we *repent* we ſhall be *forgiven*, yet there is a great Latitude in Repentance, and what degree in ſome caſes will be available, is a ſecret God has kept to himſelf. For we don't know the full heinouſneſs of our Sins, nor how far God was provoked by 'em, nor conſequently by what degrees of ſorrow and amendment he will be appeas'd. And 'tis moſt certain there is a mighty difference. To *Simon Magus* 'twas almoſt a deſperate caſe: *If peradventure the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee*, Act. 8. 22. And ſome are ſaid to be ſav'd with *fear*, & as it were pull'd out of the *fire*. Jud. 22. And we know what the great Apoſtle has ſaid, *I know nothing by my ſelf, yet am I not thereby juſtify'd.* All which argues a great latitude and variety even in *neceſſary* preparations, and how to ſtate the matter *exactly* we don't know, and therefore as far as we are able ſhould be ſure to do *enough*, for we may eaſily do too *little*, and can never do too *much* in a matter of ſuch high importance.

From all which I conclude, 1ſt that thoſe who withdraw themſelves (as far as is conſiſtent with

with charity and the profecution of the public good) from the noiſe, hurry and buſineſs of the world, that they may apply themſelves more ſerenely and entirely to a life of Devotion and Religion, and more freely and undiſtractedly attend upon the grand concern of another world, act very *wiſely* and *prudently*. For *this* is *wiſdom*, to take a right eſtimate of things, to proportion our care to their value, and to mind that moſt which is moſt concerning. This is what the Apoſtle commends, *to lay aſide every weight*, that we may be the ſurer to win the great *prize*, and *ſo to run as to obtain*. This laſtly is the very part which *Mary* choſe, and which our Lord aſſures us ſhall *never be taken away from her*.

Again I conclude, that all thoſe who are either wholly negligent of this their grand intereſt, or that do not principally regard it, and as our Saviour ſpeaks, in the firſt place *ſeek the kingdom of God*, that are more intent upon this world than the next, that will venture to play the knave for a little *preferment*, that make uſe of Religion as an inſtrument for ſecular deſigns, in one word, that in any kind forfeit their great intereſt in the *other* world, for a little in *this*, are the greateſt *Fools* in nature. This Meaſure I confeſs will take in a great many, and ſome perhaps who would think it a great affront to be reckon'd of the number. But it can't be help'd, the charge is moſt unqueſtionably true,

and

and they themſelves however conceited of their wit and parts now, will once be of the ſame opinion, when they ſhall ſay, *we Fools thought his life madneſs.*

God grant we may all ſo number our days, and ſo compare our two intereſts, as to apply our hearts to *greater* wiſdom.

A Me-

A
METAPHYSICAL ESSAY
TOWARD THE
Demonſtration of a GOD,
From the Steddy and Immutable nature of Truth.

A Metaphyſical Eſſay &c.

Sect. I.

How difficult a thing 'tis to demonſtrate a God by any new medium, and how far the preſent Eſſay may pretend to do ſo.

1. IT has been the curious emploiment of ſo many and ſo excellent Pens to demonſtrate the Exiſtence of a God, and this they have done with ſuch variety of Arguments, Moral, Phyſical and Metaphyſical, that however eaſy it may be to contrive new *Poſtures*, and ring other Changes upon the ſame Bells, 'tis yet almoſt as difficult to find out an Argument for the proof of a God that has not been uſed already, as to reſiſt the Cogency of thoſe that *have*. So that here if any where, that of *Solomon* is more than ordinarily verify'd, *The thing that has been it is that which ſhall be, and that which is done is that which ſhall be done, and there is no new thing under the Sun.* Eccleſ. 1. 9.

2. The neweſt indeed that has of late years appear'd to the world is that of the celebrated *Deſ-Cartes*, taken from the Idea of God conſider'd both abſolutely in its ſelf, as including all kinds and degrees of Perfection and conſe-

quently Exiſtence, and as 'tis ſubjected in the mind of man, which (as he contends) could never have had ſuch an Idea, were there not ſomthing which had all that Perfection in it *Formally* or eminently, which is in the Idea *objectively*.

3. Now tho this Procedure of his be extraordinarily fine and ſubtile, and ſuch as (to the firſt part at leaſt) will appear no leſs ſtrong and concluding to any capable and indifferent Perſon, that conſiders it as 'tis managed at large by its ingenious Author, yet this was not a Notion newly excogitated but only revived by him. For *Aquinas* had before lighted upon the former and refuſed it, and he is beholding to St. *Auſtin* and the School of the *Platoniſts* for the latter.

4. I ſpeak not this to diminiſh one *ray* from the *glory* of that incomparable Speculatiſt. That which I remark here is not the Barrenneſs of his *Invention*, but that of the *exhauſted Subject*. The matter had been ſqueez'd before to the laſt drop, and his only fault was that he was not *born ſooner*. Which might be a ſufficient Apology if this Procedure of mine prove not entirely new and *unblown* upon. Whether it be or no 'tis not poſſible (without examining all the books in the world) abſolutely to determin. This much I believe I may venture to ſay, that 'tis no where univerſally receiv'd, nor by any that I know of induſtriouſly and profeſſedly

feſſedly managed, and that laſtly 'tis as new as the matter will now afford, and conſequently as any man in reaſon ought to expect.

Sect. II.

The various acceptations of Truth, and which that is which is made the ground of the preſent Demonſtration.

1. HAving undertaken to demonſtrate the Exiſtence of God from the ſteddy and immutable nature of *Truth*, I am firſt to diſtinguiſh the *Equivocalneſs* or latitude of the word, and then to point out to that determinate part, which I intend for the ground of my *Demonſtration*.

2. The moſt general Partition of Truth is into *Truth of the Thing* and *Truth of the underſtanding*, or (according to the language of the Schools) Truth of the *Object* and Truth of the *Subject*. Both of theſe again have a double *ſubdiviſion*. For by Truth of the Object may be underſtood either that *Tranſcendental* verity which is convertible with *Ens*, and runs through the whole *Circle* of Being whereby every thing is really what it is, which is *ſimple* Truth. Or elſe certain Relations and Habitudes of things one towards another whether Affirmatively or Negatively, which is *Complex* Truth.

3. And ſo again by Truth of the *Subject* may be underſtood either a due conformity between the *underſtanding* and the *Object*, when I compound what is compounded, and divide what is divided, which is *Logical* Truth. Or elſe a due conformity between the *words* and the *underſtanding*, when I ſpeak as I think, which is *Moral* Truth or *Veracity*.

4. Now the Truth, upon whoſe immutable Nature I build the Demonſtration of a God, is not that of the *Subject*, but that of the *Object*. Nor that neither according to its *ſimple* and *Tranſcendental* acceptation, but as it ſignifies certain immutable relations and habitudes of things one towards another by way of Affirmation and Negation, which is *Truth* of the *Object Complex*.

SECT. III.

That there are ſuch Relations and Habitudes of things toward one another, and that they are ſteddy and immutable.

1. TWo things are here aſſerted, 1ſt that there are Relations and Habitudes of things towards one another, and 2ly that they are ſteddy and immutable. Firſt I ſay, there are certain relations and habitudes betwixt thing and thing. Thus there is a certain habitude between ſome *Premiſes* and ſome *Concluſions*,

ſions, for any thing will not follow from any thing; between ſome *Objects* and ſome *Faculty*; between ſome *ends* and ſome *means*; between ſome *Subjects* and ſome *Predicates*, and the like.

2. This is as true as that there is any ſuch thing as *Truth*. For Truth is nothing elſe, but the Compoſition or Diviſion of Ideas according to their reſpective Habitudes and Relations. And without *Truth* there can be no ſuch thing as *Knowledg*, for knowledg is *Truth of the Subject*; 'tis a man's thinking of things as they are; and that ſuppoſes Truth of the *Object*. Which whoſoever denies, contradicts himſelf, and eſtabliſhes the Propoſition which he deſign'd to overthrow; and conſequently, *univerſal* Scepticiſm is the very extremity of nonſenſe and inconſiſtency.

3. And as there are certain habitudes and relations between things; ſo aly ſome of them are ſteddy and immutable, that never were *made* by any underſtanding or will, nor can ever be *unmade* or null'd by them; but have a fixt and unalterable ἀϊδιότης from everlaſting to everlaſting. And conſequently there are not only *Truths*, but *eternal* Truths.

4. As firſt in *general*, 'tis a Propoſition of neceſſary and eternal Truth, that there muſt be ever ſuch a thing as *Truth*, or that *ſomthing* muſt be *True*, for let it be affirm'd or denyed, Truth thruſts in upon us either way. And ſo aly

there are many *particular* Propoſitions of eternal and unchangeable Verity, as in *Logic*, that the Cauſe is always before the Effect in order of Nature; in *Phyſics*, that all local motion is by ſucceſſion; in *Metaphyſics*, that nothing can be and not be at once; in *Mathematics*, that all right Angles are equal, that thoſe lines which are parallel to the ſame Right line are alſo parallel to each other, &c. Theſe and ſuch like are ſtanding and *irrepealable* Truths, ſuch as have no precarious exiſtence, or arbitrarious dependence upon any will or underſtanding whatſoever; and ſuch as all Intellectual operations do not *make*, but *ſuppoſe*; it being as much againſt the nature of underſtanding to make that Truth which it ſpeculates, as 'tis againſt the nature of the eye to create that light by which it ſees, or of an Image to make that Object which it *repreſents*.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

That since there are Eternal and immutable Veritys or Habitudes of things, the simple essences of things must be also eternal and immutable.

1. HAving gain'd this Point that there are eternal and immutable Veritys or Habitudes of things, the next will be, that upon this Postulatum it necessarily follows that the *Simple Essences* of things must be also eternal and immutable. For as there can be no Truth of the *Subject* without Truth of the *Object* to which it may be conformable (as was before observ'd) so neither can there be Truth of the Object *Complex* without Truth of the Object *Simple*.

2. This will appear undeniably true to any one that attends to the Idea of *Objective Truth Complex*, which is nothing else but certain Habitudes or Respects betwixt thing and thing as to Composition or Division. For how can there be any such *Habitudes* or *Relations* without the *Simple Essences* themselves from which they *result*? As for instance, how can any Mathematical Proposition, suppose that of *Euclid*, that if two Circles touch one another inwardly they have not the same common Center, have this habitude, unless there be two such distinct simple Essences as *Circle* and *Center*? These Habi-

tudes can no more ſubſiſt by themſelves than any other *Relations* can, they muſt have their *Simple Eſſences* as the other have their *Subject* and *Term*, upon the poſition of which they immediatly *reſult*.

3. If therefore there can be no Truth of the Object *Complex* without Truth of the Object *Simple*, and there can be no Habitudes and Relations of Compoſition and Diviſion without the ſimple Eſſences themſelves, it follows that whenſoever the one does exiſt the other muſt exiſt alſo, and conſequently if the one be eternal the other muſt be eternal alſo, and ſo (to recur to the former inſtance) if it be a Propoſition of eternal Truth that if two Circles touch one another inwardly they have not the ſame Common Center, the two diſtinct ſimple Eſſences of *Circle* and *Center* muſt be from Eternity alſo, and conſequently the ſimple Eſſences of things are eternal and immutable, which was the point to be *here* demonſtrated.

SECT.

SECT. V.

That the Simple Eſſences of things being not Eternal in their Natural ſubſiſtences, muſt be ſo in their Ideal ſubſiſtences or realitys.

1. FRom the eternity of eſſential Habitudes we have demonſtrated the neceſſity that the ſimple eſſences of things ſhould be eternal. And now ſince they are not eternal (as is too plain to need Proof) in their *natural* ſubſiſtencys, it follows that they muſt be eternal in their *Ideal* ſubſiſtencys or realitys.

2. For there are but two conceivable ways how any thing may exiſt, either *out* of all underſtanding, or *within* ſome underſtanding. If therefore the ſimple Eſſences of things are eternal but not *out* of all underſtanding, it remains they muſt have an eternal exiſtence *in* ſome underſtanding, or rather they are the ſame with that underſtanding it ſelf, conſider'd as variouſly *exhibitive* or *repreſentative* according to the various modes of *Imitability* or *Participation*, which is the true Notion of *Ideas* as 'tis generally expreſs'd both by Platoniſts and Schoolmen, and as I have more at large explain'd it in my Letter of Ideas, to which for brevitys ſake I refer.

SECT.

SECT. VI.

That there is therefore an Eternal Mind or underſtanding, Omniſcient, Immutable and endow'd with all poſſible Perfection, the ſame which we call God.

1. THis evidently follows from the Concluſion of the foregoing Section, for if the ſimple Eſſences of things have a real and eternal exiſtence in ſome underſtanding, what conſequence can be more plain than that there is a Mind or underſtanding eternally exiſting? An Eſſence can no more *eternally* exiſt in a *Temporary* underſtanding, than a Body can be *infinitely* extended in a *finite* ſpace. The mind therefore wherein it does exiſt muſt be eternal; there is therefore in the firſt place an *Eternal* Mind.

2. 'Twill follow alſo in the next place that this Mind is *Omniſcient* as well as Eternal. For that Mind which is eternally fraught with the *ſimple Eſſences* of things, muſt needs contain alſo in it ſelf all the ſeveral *Habitudes* and *Reſpects* of them, theſe neceſſarily ariſing from the other by way of *Natural reſult*. For as before, the Argument was good from the Habitudes of things to their ſimple Eſſences, ſo is it as good backwards from the ſimple Eſſences of things to their Habitudes. But theſe are the ſame with *Truths*. That Mind therefore which has

has all *theſe* has all *Truths*, which is the ſame as to be *Omniſcient*.

3. 'Twill follow hence alſo in the next place, that this Mind is *Immutable* as well as *Omniſcient* and *Eternal*. For if that Mind which has exiſting in it ſelf from all eternity, all the ſimple Eſſences of things and conſequently all their poſſible Scheſes or Habitudes ſhould ever *change*, there would ariſe a *new* Scheſis in this Mind that was not before, which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. 'Tis impoſſible therefore that this Mind ſhould ever undergo any mutation, eſpecially if theſe eternal Ideas and Habitudes be one and the ſame with this Mind, as I have already *hinted* and elſewhere *proved*. See my Letter of Ideas.

4. Laſtly 'twill follow that this Mind is not only *Eternal*, *Immutable* and *Omniſcient*, but that in a word 'tis endow'd with all *poſſible* perfection. For to *have*, and it ſelf to *be* all the Eſſences and Habitudes of things is to *have* and to *be* all that can *poſſibly* be, to be the *rule* and *meaſure* of all perfection, to be ſupreme in the *Scale* of Being, and to be the *Root*, and Spring of all *Entity*, which is the ſame as to be *God*. This *Mind* therefore ſo accompliſh'd is no other than *God*, and conſequently *there is a God*, which was the thing I undertook to *demonſtrate*.

Poſt-

Poſt-ſcript.

THis *Eſſay* has lain by me a conſiderable time, and I have lately review'd it with all the *coldneſs* and *indifferency* of a *Stranger*, and with more *ſeverity* perhaps than I am like to meet with from the moſt *Prejudiced Reader*. I have *turn'd* it and *view'd* it on all ſides, and, after the moſt deliberate and impartial ſcrutiny that I could make, I muſt needs own, that I am not conſcious of the leaſt *flaw* in the whole Procedure.

I know but of one place that is liable to any *reaſonable* exception, and that is in the fourth Section. The Propoſition there maintain'd is this, that *ſince there are eternal and immutable Veritys or Habitudes of things, the ſimple Eſſences of things muſt be alſo eternal and immutable.* Here it may be objected, that theſe Habitudes are not attributed *abſolutely* to the ſimple Eſſences as *actually* exiſting, but only *Hypothetically*, that whenſoever they *ſhall* exiſt, they ſhall alſo carry ſuch *Relations* to one another. There is you'l ſay only an Hypothetical Connexion between the *Subject* and the *Predicate*, not an abſolute *Poſition* of either.

But in anſwer to this I ſay firſt, that theſe Habitudes are not (as is ſuppoſed) only by way

of

of *Hypotheſis*, but *abſolutely* attributed to the ſimple Eſſences as *actually* exiſting. For when I ſay, for inſtance, that every part of a Circle is equally diſtant from the Center, this Propoſition does not hang in *ſuſpence*, then to be verify'd when the things ſhall exiſt in *Nature*, but is at *preſent actually* true, as true as it ever *will* or *can* be; and conſequently, I may thence infer that the things themſelves *already* are. There is no neceſſity, I confeſs, they ſhould exiſt in *Nature*, (which is all that the Objection proves) but *exiſt* they muſt. For of *Nothing* there can be no *Affections*.

But aly, ſuppoſe I grant what the Objector would have, that theſe Habitudes are not *abſolutely* attributed to the ſimple Eſſences, but only by way of *Hypotheſis*; yet I don't ſee what he can gain by this conceſſion. For thus much at leaſt is attributed to the ſimple Eſſences at *preſent*, that whenſoever they *ſhall* exiſt, ſuch and ſuch Habitudes will attend them. I ſay, thus much is attributed *actually*, and at *preſent*: But now how can any thing be ſaid of that which is not? There is therefore another way of exiſting beſides that in *rerum Natura*; namely, in the *Mundus Archetypus* or the *Ideal world*, where all the *Rationes rerum* or ſimple Eſſences of things whereof there are ſtanding and immutable Affirmations and Negations, have an eternal and immutable Exiſtence, before ever they enter upon the *ſtage* of *Nature*.

Nor

Nor ought this *Ideal* way of ſubſiſting to ſeem ſtrange, when even while things have a *Natural* ſubſiſtence, the Propoſitions concerning them are not verify'd according to their *Natural*, but according to their *Ideal* ſubſiſtences. Thus we demonſtrate ſeveral Propoſitions concerning a right line, a Circle *&c.* and yet 'tis moſt certain that none of theſe are to be found in Nature according to that *exactneſs* ſuppoſed in the *Demonſtration*. Such and ſuch Attributes therefore belong to them not as they are in *Nature*, but as they are in their *Ideas*. This is a Notion very frequently *glanc'd* at by Saint *Auſtin*, and 'tis the Concluſion of *Aquinas*, that the Soul *Omnia vera cognoſcit in rationibus æternis*, Part. 1. Qu. 84. Art. 5. And of late years this Notion has been much improv'd by the ingenious Philoſopher *Du Hamel* in his book *De Mente humana*. And if this be true in Propoſitions whoſe Subjects are in *Nature*, much more is it in *eternal* Propoſitions, whoſe ſimple Eſſences have not always a *natural* exiſtence. Theſe can no otherwiſe be verify'd but by the *coeternal* Exiſtence of *ſimple Eſſences* in the *Ideal* world.

One thing I have more to add in the vindication of this *Eſſay*; Whereas in the 3d Section it was aſſerted that the nature of Truth is ſteddy and immutable, and ſuch as has no precarious exiſtence or arbitrarious dependence upon any underſtanding whatever, and yet in the

5th

5th Section 'tis affirm'd that it owes its exiſtence to ſome mind or other; leſt one part of this Meditation ſhould be thought to claſh againſt another, I thought it requiſite to adjuſt this ſeeming contradiction. For the clearing of which, we muſt be beholding to that celebrated Diſtinction of the Platonic School, of the Divine Mind into νοῦς γεννὸς and νοῦς νοητὸς, *Conceptive* and *Exhibitive*. Truth does by no means *depend* upon any mind as *Conceptive*, whether Human or Divine, but is *ſuppoſed* by it, which is the ſenſe of the 3d Section. But upon mind as *Exhibitive* it may and does *ultimately* depend; ſo that if there were no *God* or Eternal Mind, there could be no *Truth*, which is the ſenſe of the 5th Section. So that here is no contradiction, but all Harmony and Agreement. See more of this in my Letter of Ideas.

THE

THE CHRISTIAN LAW *Asserted and Vindicated.*

OR,

A general Apology for the Christian Religion, both as to the *Obligativeness* and *Reasonableness* of the Institution.

THE CHRISTIAN LAW *Aſſerted and Vindicated,* &c.

1. I Deſign here to conſider two things concerning Chriſtianity:
1ſt, That it is a ſtate of Service,
2ly, That it is a Reaſonable Service.
The eviction of theſe two Propoſitions will contain both the *Aſſertion* of the Chriſtian Law and its *Vindication*, and be a plenary juſtification of its Divine Author from the imputation of two ſorts of Adverſarys, thoſe that reflect upon his *Wiſdom*, by ſuppoſing that he requires *nothing* to be done by his ſervants, and thoſe that reflect upon his *goodneſs*, by ſuppoſing him a *Hard Maſter*, and that he requires unreaſonable performances.

2. I begin therefore with the 1ſt Propoſition concerning the Chriſtian Inſtitution, that it is a *ſervice*. It is moſt certain that the Chriſtian Religion according to the genuine ſenſe and deſign of its Divine Author, is the moſt wiſe and excellent Inſtitution that could poſſibly be framed, both for the *glory* of the *Divine* At-

tributes, and the beſt Intereſts of *Mankind*. And *without Controverſy* (if we take it as 'tis exhibited to us in the inſpired writings) *great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs*. But if we conſult the perverſe gloſſes and Comments of ſome of our Chriſtian *Rabbins*, and take our meaſures of the Chriſtian Religion from thoſe ill-favour'd Schemes and Draughts of it we meet with in *Dutch Syſtemes*, as ſome Chriſtians are the worſt of *men*, ſo will their Religion appear to be the worſt of *Religions*, a ſenſeleſs and ridiculous Inſtitution, not worthy the Contrivance of a wiſe *Politician*, much leſs of him who is the *Wiſdom of the Father*. It fares here with Chriſtianity as with a *Picture*, that is drawn at ſo many *remote* hands, till at length it degenerates from the *Original* Truth, and wants an *under-title* to diſcover whoſe it is. And indeed whatever Declamations are made againſt *Judaiſm* and *Paganiſm*, the worſt enemys of the Chriſtian Religion are ſome of thoſe that profeſs and teach it. For if it be in reality as ſome (who call themſelves *Orthodox*) deſcribe it, I may boldly ſay, that 'tis neither for the reputation of God to be the *Author* of ſuch a Religion, nor for the intereſt of men to be *guided* by it, and that as *ſin took occaſion by the Law*, ſo may it (and that more juſtly) by the *Goſpel* too, to *deceive* and ruin the world; by that Goſpel which was intended as the Inſtrument both of its temporal and eternal welfare.

1 Tim. 3. 16.

Rom. 7. 11.

3. For

3. For if you look upon Chriſtianity as ſome men are pleas'd to hold the *Perſpective*, it is no way accommodated for the promotion of Holineſs and Vertue, but is rather a perfect Diſcharge from all duty, and a *Charter* of *Licentiouſneſs*. For among other miſrepreſentations of the Goſpel this is one, (and I think the moſt pernicious one that the Sophiſtry of Hell could ever ſuggeſt) that it requires nothing to be done by its Proſelytes. A Notion ſo ridiculous and miſchievous as is fit for none but a profane *Epicure* to embrace, who may be allow'd to make his *Religion* as idle and *Sedentary* as he does his *God*. Nay, 'tis not only ridiculous and miſchievous, but in the higheſt meaſure *Antichriſtian*. For what greater *Antichriſtianiſm* can there be than that, which ſtrikes not only at ſome of the main branches, but at the very Root of Chriſtianity, and at once evacuates the entire purpoſe and aim of the Goſpel.

4. But to ſet this mark upon the right forehead, there are three ſorts of men that come in ſome meaſure or other under this Charge. The firſt are the *Antinomians*, who are impudent and ignorant enough in expreſs terms to aſſert, that the Sacrifice and Satisfaction of Chriſt does wholly excuſe us from all manner of Duty and Obedience, as if we *Libertins* of the Goſpel were ſo far from being bound to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling*, that we are not to work at all; and as if the

Design of Christ's coming were only to satisfy for the transgressions committed against the *old* Covenant, and not at all to introduce a *new* one, and to discharge us from the Obligation of the *Moral* as well as *Ceremonial* Law.

5. Nay some there are among them that carry the business yet higher, and exclude not only the Repentance and good works of men, but even the Mediation of Christ himself, at least the necessity of it, by supposing an *Anticipating* Justification or Pardon from all eternity, which they found upon the secret decree and Counsel of God.

6. The next that have a share in the forementiond Charge are those, who make Christianity a matter of bare speculation, and think all Religion absolv'd in *Orthodoxy* of Opinion; that care not how men *live* but only how they *teach*, and are so over intent upon the *Creed*, that they neglect the *Commandments*. Little considering that *Opinion* is purely in order to *Practise*, and that Orthodoxy of judgment is necessary only in *such* matters, where a mistake would be of dangerous influence to our *actions*, that is in *Fundamentals*. So that the necessity of *thinking* rightly is derived from the necessity of *doing* rightly, and consequently the latter is the more necessary of the two.

7. I am as ready to grant as the most zealous stickler for *Orthodoxy* can desire, that our understandings are under obligation in Divine matters,

ters, but withall I think it abſurd that the Obligation ſhould *terminate* there, ſince then 'twould follow, 1ſt that all Theological Science were merely ſpeculative, 2ly that we are bound to exact Orthodoxy in *all* ſpeculations, (there being then no reaſon why in one and not in another) and 3ly, (which is the greateſt abſurdity of all) that we are obliged and tied up to no purpoſe, becauſe nothing is effected by it. Whenever therefore we are obliged to ſoundneſs of Judgment, 'tis purely in order to the regulation of our Practiſe, and conſequently ſolitary Orthodoxy does not ſatisfy its *own* end, much leſs that of Chriſtianity. For to what purpoſe ſerves the *Direction* of the *Compaſs*, if there be neither wind nor ſail to carry on the veſſel to the Haven.

8. But there are yet another ſort of men who are juſtly chargeable with expunging all Duty from the Chriſtian Inſtitution; I mean the *Solifidians*, who under a pretence of advancing the merits of the Croſs, and the freeneſs of the Divine Grace, require nothing of a Chriſtian in order to his *Juſtification* and acceptance before God, but firmly to rely on the ſatisfaction and merits of Chriſt, and without any more ado to *apply* all to himſelf. And herein, they do not only contradict the *general deſign* and *particular expreſſes* of the Goſpel, but treſpaſs againſt all *Logic* and common ſenſe. They contradict the *Goſpel*, in requiring no-

thing *but* faith, whereas that (as we ſhall ſee anon) equally requires *obedience*. And they contradict common *ſenſe* in requiring *ſuch* a Faith. For they put the Concluſion before the Premiſes, and make that the firſt act of faith which ſuppoſes others, and in due order ought to be the laſt. And beſides, they make that act of Faith contribute *inſtrumentally* towards the *effecting* of Juſtification, which in order of nature is *conſequent* to it, and ſuppoſes it *already effected*. For I muſt be firſt Juſtify'd before I can rightly believe that I am ſo, otherwiſe I ſhall believe a falſe Propoſition, ſince (as the moſt elementary Logician well knows) the certitude of the ſubject does not *make* but *ſuppoſe* that of the object.

9. But I could diſpenſe with the *unphiloſophicalneſs* of this their Hypotheſis were it not withall *unchriſtian*, and utterly deſtructive of all Piety and Vertue. The great miſchief is, they unty the cords of Duty, and exclude the neceſſity of Obedience as *really* and effectually, tho not ſo *formally* and expreſly as the *Antinomians* do. For they require nothing but Faith to qualify a man for Pardon, and tho afterwards for modeſty's ſake they come in halting with good works, yet 'tis at ſuch a time when they might as well have left them out. 'Tis when the grand buſineſs (for which alone they could be neceſſary) is over, *when the man is number'd among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints.*

And

And to ſay here that good works are neceſſary to *Salvation* tho not to *Juſtification*, is a Myſtery above my conception, or rather an abſurdity below my further notice. Nor will it ſalve the matter to ſay that they are neceſſary to *declare* our Juſtification before *men*, or to aſcertain it to our *ſelves* and the like, for alas what does ſuch a neceſſity amount to? No more than this, that they are neceſſary for *ſuch* ends which *themſelves* are not neceſſary. And beſides, how can they *declare* or aſcertain our Juſtification when they are not the *conditions* of it? So that 'tis plain both from the *lateneſs* of the time when, and from the *incompetency* of the grounds for which they inſert good works, that they put them merely out of *Complaiſance*, not becauſe they think them neceſſary, but becauſe they are aſhamed to declare expreſly that they are not. Which appears yet further from the *nature* of thoſe works they are at *length* pleas'd to inſert. They are ſuch (for there is nothing that theſe men are ſo much affraid of as *meriting*) as are much ſhort of that ſincerity and perfection which is required by the Goſpel. For 'tis notorious that they ſet the ſtate of Regeneration ſo *low* that 'tis conſiſtent with the dominion and prevalency of ſin. A bare reluctancy of the Spirit (tho foil'd in the conflict) againſt the fleſh, is eſteem'd a ſufficient mark of a *Regenerate* perſon; and this every ſinner that has the leaſt Remains of Conſcience, the leaſt

leaſt *Twilight* of natural light left him muſt needs have; for no man loves ſin for it *ſelf*, nay he hates it as 'tis in it ſelf abſolutely an evil, only he chuſes and wills it *Comparatively* to avoid (as he then thinks) a greater evil.

Mat. 15. 6. 10. Thus as the *Jewiſh* Doctors did the *Law*, do theſe men make the *Goſpel*, of none effect by their *Traditions*, and would queſtionleſs, were our Lord now on earth, have a ſeverer woe pronounc'd againſt them as Perverters of a more excellent, a more perfect Inſtitution. Strange, that men ſhould corrupt and ridicule ſo admirable a Diſpenſation, and turn ſo great a grace of God into wantonneſs! That there ſhould be ſome δυσνόητα in the Goſpel which unlearn'd and unſtable men might wreſt to their own deſtruction is no very hard matter to imagine, but that men ſhould at once pervert the whole ſcope and deſign of it is prodigious as well as Antichriſtian, a *Myſtery* of *wonder* as of *Iniquity*. And have *theſe* men the face to declaim againſt the Papiſts for leaving out *one* of the Commandments, when as they draw a black ſtroke over the whole Table? Nay further, have they the face to call themſelves Chriſtians, and that of the Purer ſort too, who thus evacuate the *Myſtery* of *Godlineſs*? By the ſame figure of ſpeech might the Heathen Emperours aſſume that ſacred name, when they endeavour'd to perſecute it out of the world. Nay much more plauſibly, for they only

ly lopt off the Branches, but theſe ſtrike at the very Root of Chriſtianity, they applied their forces againſt the Profeſſours of the Chriſtian Religion, theſe againſt the Religion it ſelf, and (what aggravates the malice) not as open enemys, but as Treacherous Friends, under the demure pretence of *Purity*, *Orthodoxy* and *Saintſhip*. They cancel the laws of Chriſt and at the ſame time pretend to advance his kingdom, call him Maſter, kiſs and betray him. And how can it now be expected that theſe men ſhould be more forward than they are to yield obedience to the *King*, who have found out an Expedient to ſlip their necks out of *Chriſt*'s yoke, and have made the Goſpel in a worſe ſenſe, a *Dead* letter than the *Law*?

11. But certainly the gate that leads to Heaven is much ſtraiter than theſe men are pleas'd to make it, otherwiſe there would be no need of *ſtriving* to enter in at it. Luke 13.24.

There are things to be done, as well as to be believ'd and underſtood under the Evangelical diſpenſation, and Chriſtianity is a *Service* as well as a *Profeſſion*. To the clearing and eſtabliſhing of which Propoſition I ſhall conſider the Goſpel under a double Capacity, 1ſt as a Law, and 2ly as a Covenant. And firſt as a *Law*. 'Tis moſt certain that Chriſt was a Lawgiver as well as Moſes, only as he was an *Introducer of a better Hope*, ſo he required better and ſublimer Services. The advantage Heb. 7. 19.

vantage of Christianity does not consist in having any abatements of Duty, for Christ was so far from diminishing or retrenching the *Moral* Law (for 'tis of that I speak) that he improv'd every part of it to higher senses than the most exquisite of the Jewish Doctors *understood*, or at least conceiv'd themselves *obliged* to; As is evident from his divine Sermon on the Mount, which for the Perfection and Sublimity of its Precepts St. *Chrysostom* calls Ἄκρον τ̃ φιλοσοφίας, *the Top and Height of Philosophy.*

12. And that he thus improv'd the Law of Moses, besides the evidence of *Comparison*, we have his own express word for it: *I came not to destroy the Law but to perfect*, compleat or fill it up. For so the word (πληρῶσαι) properly signifies. The σκιαγραφία or rude draught was Moses his part, but the ζωγράφησις πλείω or the painting to the life was Christ's. Moses drew out the main lineaments, the *Skeleton* of the Picture (which was therefore call'd the *Body of Moses*) but 'twas Christ that fill'd up all its intervals and vacuitys, and gave it all its graces, Air and *Life-touches*. And this is no more than what the Analogy of the Christian dispensation required. The great end and design of God incarnate was to perfect Holiness, as well as to retrieve Happiness, to advance the Interests of the divine life, and make us *Partakers of the Divine nature*, and accordingly as he himself was the *express image*

Mat. 5. 17.

Jud. 9.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Heb. 1. 3.

image of his Fathers Perſon, ſo 'twas requiſite he ſhould conſign to us an expreſs image, a correct Copy of his Fathers will. He was to make us better men, and accordingly, 'twas fit he ſhould give us a better law, a Law that could not be ſatisfy'd but by ſuch a Righteouſneſs, as ſhould exceed even the ſtricteſt among the Jews, that of the Phariſees. So that we are by no means releas'd, but rather more deeply engaged in Duty by the Goſpel, as 'tis a *Law*.

13. Nor 2ly are we releas'd by it as 'tis a *Covenant*. Here indeed begin the *Abatements* of the Goſpel, not as to *Duty* and *Obligation*, for the Goſpel makes all that our Duty which the Law did and more, only (which in ſhort is the true difference between the two Covenants) it does not make the ſtrict and exact performance of it the Meaſure, the ultimate Meaſure whereby we are to ſtand or fall, but admits of *Pardon* which the Law knew nothing of. Not of *abſolute* Pardon, for then the Goſpel would be a *Covenant* without a *Condition*, nor of Pardon without Repentance and actual reformation of Manners, for then the Goſpel as a *Covenant* would interfere with it ſelf as a *Law*, but upon the ſole Conditions of Faith and Repentance. For 'tis a great miſtake to think that we are actually Juſtify'd or pardon'd by the ſatisfaction of Chriſt; this wou'd be the moſt ready expedient to verify the falſe charge of the Scribes and Phariſees, and make him in *their* ſenſe a Friend

Friend to Publicans and Sinners, to encourage all manner of vice and immorality, and to turn the *Myſtery of Godlineſs* into a *Myſtery of Iniquity*. No, Chriſt in this ſenſe has redeem'd no man. All that he either did or could in wiſdom do for us as ſatisfying, was in ſhort to inſtate us in a Capacity and Poſſibility of Pardon and Reconciliation, by procuring a grant from his Father, that Faith and Repentance ſhould now be available to Juſtification, which without his ſatisfaction would not have been accepted to that purpoſe. Whereby it appears that he was ſo far from ſuperſeding the neceſſity of Repentance and good works, that he deſign'd only to make way for the *ſucceſs* of them; He did ſo *much* that Repentance might not be in *vain*, and he did no *more* that it might not be *needleſs*. And thus does the *wiſdom* as well as the *goodneſs* of God lead us to Repentance, by ſo ordering the matter, that we may obtain Pardon with it, and not without it, which are the two ſtrongeſt engagements to *action* in any concern, that our *Reaſon* either *demands*, or our *deliberation* can *ſuggeſt*.

14. This I conceive to be the true Hypotheſis and ſtate of Chriſtianity, which I might yet further confirm by infinite Authoritys from Scripture, which every where preſſes the neceſſity of good works as *Conditions* to our *Juſtification* and acceptance before God, but I think the more rational and unprejudiced part of the world

world are pretty well ſatisfy'd in that Point, and know how to accommodate St. *James* and St *Paul* better then ſome late *Reconcilers*. And beſides, the wiſdom of the Hypotheſis ſufficiently approves it ſelf; 'Tis ſuch as becomes the Perfections of the Divine Nature to exhibit to the world, and which the Angels may well deſire to look into. For 'tis at once fitted to the *neceſſitys* of man, and to the *Honour* of God, to the infirmitys of the *Animal* life, and to the advancement of the *Divine*, to the relief of the *Sinner* and to the ſuppreſſion of *ſin*. Here *Mercy and Truth meet together, righteouſneſs and peace kiſs each other*. The Sacrifice of the Altar does not prejudice the Ballance of the Sanctuary, and the Divine Juſtice is ſo ſatisfy'd that the neceſſity of Holineſs and Obedience remains ſecured. Much is *forgiven*, and much is to be *done*, Duty continues as faſt as ever, and even the *Law* of *Liberty* is a *Service*. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

15. And now that this may not be thought a *Hard* ſaying, and make ſome of Jeſus his Diſciples to go back (as once they did) and walk no more with him when they hear of Duty and ſomthing to be done, I ſhall now proceed to demonſtrate the *Reaſonableneſs* of that Service which Chriſtianity requires of us, which was the 2d general Propoſition I propoſed to ſpeak to.

16. Religion is ſo very agreeable both to the *Inclinations* and *Diſcourſings* of Human Nature,

ture, that as none is capable of being Religious but a rational creature, so 'tis almost impossible for a creature to be indued with Reason and not to be Religious. Hence 'tis that there is no Nation so barbarous and degenerate but what has some Religion or other, and tho ignorant of the true Object as well as manner of worship, yet rather than wholly abstain from Religious applications will adore *implicitely*, and erect an altar Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ *to the unknown God.*

17. Nay so great a congruity is there between Religion and the radical notices and sentiments of a human Soul, that all mankind except only some few distorted and *Anomalous* heads (for there are monstrositys in the *Soul* as well as in the *Body*) are unanimously agreed upon the *fundamental* and substantial Maxims of it, which for their correspondency to our rational Natures are usually distinguish'd by the name of *Natural Religion.* For there are Practical as well as Speculative Principles, and that he who does no hurt is to receive none is as evident a Proposition in *Morality*, as that the whole is greater than its part is in the *Mathematics*, or that nothing can be and not be at once, is in the *Metaphysics.*

18. And as *Religion* and *Natural* Religion carry such a strict conformity to our Rational facultys, so does *Reveal'd* Religion too. All the lines of this as well as of the other point all the way at, and at last concentre in the Happi-

ness

neſs and welfare of mankind. 'Tis a perſuance of the ſame excellent end, only by more cloſe and direct means. For God in all his intercourſes with us does accommodate himſelf to our *natures*, and as he will not forcibly *determin* us to *good* becauſe he has made us *free*, ſo neither does he require any thing from us but what is good and conſiſtent with *Reaſon*, becauſe he has made us *Rational*. And altho we cannot by this *Candle of the Lord* find out ſome of the great and *wonderful* things of his Law (for herein conſiſts the formal difference between Natural and Reveal'd Religion) yet when they are once propoſed to us, they are highly approv'd by our Intellectual reliſh, and ſtrike perfect uniſons to the voice of our Reaſon, ſo that even the *Animal* man (for 'tis of him the Apoſtle there ſpeaks) *conſents to the Law that it is good.* Prov. 20. 27. Hoſ. 8. 12. Rom. 7. 16.

19. And indeed were it not ſo, it would be as unfit for God to propoſe, as hard for man to receive, ſince even the Prudence of a *Nation* is by no one thing either more juſtify'd or condemn'd, than by the good or ill contrivance of its *Laws*. Shall not then the *law-giver* of the whole world *enact that which is right*, as well as the *Judge* of all the Earth *do* right? Shall he not be as *wiſe* in the *framing* of his law, as he is *Juſt* in the *Execution* of it? God in contriving the Mechaniſm of the material world diſplaid the excellency of his Divine *Geo-* Gen. 18. 25.

metry, and made all things in *Number, Weight* and *Measure. He eſtabliſh'd the world*
Jer. 10. 12. *by his wiſdom, and ſtretch'd out the heavens by his diſcretion.* And ſhall he not govern the Intellectual world with as much wiſdom as he made the Natural one? Queſtionleſs he does, and the law, which he has preſcrib'd to us, is as perfect and excellent, as that whereby he wrought the Beauty and Order of the univerſe.
Pſal. 145. For *the Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.* He has accommodated his Statutes and Judgments both to the infinite perfection of his own Nature, and both to the actual perfection and capacity of
Rom. 7. 14. ours. *God is a ſpirit* and accordingly (as the Apoſtle tells us) *the Law is Spiritual.* Man is Rational, and accordingly the Homage he is to pay to him that made him ſo, is no other than a *Reaſonable Service.*

20. But to be as compendious, and yet withall as juſt and diſtinct as may be in ſo copious and plentiful a Subject, I conſider, that as the whole rational nature of man conſiſts of two facultys, underſtanding and will (whether really or notionally diſtinct I ſhall not now diſpute.) So Chriſtianity, whoſe end is to perfect the whole man and give the *laſt* accompliſhment both to our Intellectual and Moral powers, will be wholly abſolv'd in theſe two parts, things to be *believ'd* and things to be *done.* If therefore in both theſe it can acquit it ſelf at

the

the *Bar* of *Reaſon*, the Concluſion is evident that it is a *Reaſonable Service.*

21. Firſt then as to the things which are to be *believ'd.* Now theſe are either the Authority and Truth of the whole Chriſtian Inſtitution, or the Truth of particular Myſterys contain'd in it. The 1ſt of theſe will appear to be a reaſonable Object of faith two ways, 1ſt from the nature of its Deſign and its excellent aptneſs to compaſs it, and 2ly from extrinſic Arguments and collateral circumſtances. And 1ſt, 'tis recommended to us by the nature of its Deſign, and its excellent aptneſs to compaſs it. It is (according to the precedent repreſentation) a very wiſe and rational *Hypotheſis*, above the reaſon of man indeed at firſt to contrive, but ſuch as when propoſed it muſt needs approve and acquieſce in, as at once the *Power and Wiſdom of God*, becauſe (as I firſt obſerv'd, and ſhall hereafter more plainly demonſtrate) 'tis ſo admirably fitted to the Honor of God, and to the neceſſitys of man, thereby verifying that double part of the Angelical anthem at the appearance of its Divine Author, and at once bringing *glory to God on high, and on earth Peace to men of good will.* 1 Cor. 1. 24. Luke 2. 14.

22. And as it appears thus rational in its general *Idea* or *Structure*, and thereby ſpeaks it ſelf *worthy* of God, ſo 2ly that it came *actually* from him no Rational perſon can doubt, that

conſiders that conjugation of Arguments, that *cloud* of *witneſſes* whereby its divine Original ſtands atteſted. Such as are the variety of Prophecys and Prefigurations, their punctual and exact accompliſhment in the Author of this Inſtitution, his Birth, Life, Miracles and Doctrine, his Paſſion, Death, Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, with all the wonderful *Arrear* and train of Accidents that enſued for the Confirmation of Chriſtianity, ſuch as the wonderful Suſtentation, Protection, increaſe and Continuation of Chriſts little flock the Chriſtian Church, the miraculous *aſſiſtances* and miraculous *actions* of the Apoſtles, the Harmony of the Evangeliſts, the Conſtancy and Courage of his firſt Witneſſes and Martyrs, the defeat of the Infernal Powers in the ſilencing of Oracles, the juſt puniſhment that lighted upon his enemies, and laſtly the completion of all Prophecies that proceeded out of his divine mouth while on earth, which I ſhall here only point at in general, and leave to the inlargement of every man's private meditation.

23. Then as for the particular myſterys contain'd in Chriſtianity, I know but of three that threaten any *diſturbance* to our *Philoſophy*, and thoſe are the three Catholic ones mention'd by St. *Athanaſius*, the *Trinity*, the *Hypoſtatic union* and the *Reſurrection*. Now concerning the two firſt I obſerve, that they are indeed above the adequate comprehenſion of our Reaſon, but not

not contrary or repugnant to it. For as we cannot conceive *how* these things *can* be, so neither do we positively and clearly perceive that they *cannot* be, as we do in contradictions and things contrary to reason. But as to the last, I don't in the least understand why it *should be thought a thing incredible that God* (whose very notion involves Omnipotence) *should raise the Dead.* 'Tis true, we are as ignorant how this can be as in either of the former Articles, but that it absolutely *may* be there is much plainer evidence, especially to those who think it reasonable to believe a *Creation.* Which if taken according to strictness of notion, for a Production of something out of nothing, is most confessedly a greater and more difficult performance (as to the nature of the work) than the Raising of the Dead can be. Or if more largely for producing something out of præexistent but naturally unapt matter, yet 'tis still at least equal with it. He that with the bare energy of his omnipotent word could inspirit the dead, stupid, void and formless masse, and make it move into a frame so elegant and harmonious, that the mere *Contemplation* of its Beauty and Order has by many Philosophers been thought a sufficient entertainment of life, may easily be presumed to be able to do the same in the *lesser* world, and with effect to say to a rude and disorder'd heap of dust, the *Chaos* of a human body, *stand up and live.* Acts 26. 8.

24. But after all, were this Article of the Reſurrection much more thickſet with difficulties than it is, yet would we, before we venture to determine againſt its poſſibility, ſit a while and conſider, that we are nonplus'd at a thouſand *Phænomena* in nature, which if they were not done, we ſhould have thought them abſolutely impoſſible (as for inſtance to go no further, the *Central libration* of the Earth) and now they are, we cannot comprehend 'em, that *we have ſeen but a few of Gods works* and underſtand yet fewer, and laſtly that as the poſſibility of the effect is above the comprehenſion of our Reaſon, ſo the Power of the Agent is much more ſo, we ſhould diſcern great reaſon to be cautious how we ſet limits to the Divine Omnipotence, and ſhould rather ſupport our Faith againſt all Objections with that univerſal Salvo of the Apoſtle, *I know whom I have believ'd.*

Eccleſ. 43.

2 Tim. 1. 12.

25. I deſcend now from the things that are to be *believ'd* to the things that are to be *done* in the Chriſtian Religion. And that thoſe may appear to be a Reaſonable Service, I conſider firſt in general, that the Chriſtian Law is nothing elſe but the Law of Nature *retriev'd, explain'd* and ſet in a *clearer* light. Chriſt indeed added ſome new Precepts that were not in the *Law* of *Moſes*, but not any that were not in the *Law* of *Nature*. *That* he only reſtored and reſcued from the Sophiſtications of ill Princi-

ples,

ples, and the corruptions of degenerate manners. For the clearer underſtanding of which Propoſition 'tis to be obſerv'd, that the Law of Nature was *twice* retriev'd, by *Moſes* and by *Chriſt*. Moſes did it imperfectly, with a *ſhaking* hand, and with a *rude* Pencil; He adopted 'tis true, into his Table as many of Natures Laws as were neceſſary to the preſent ſtate and capacity of the Jewiſh people, but he did not exhauſt the whole *Code* and *Digeſt* of Nature. For there are many Inſtances and Branches of the Natural Law which are no way reducible to the Moſaic Tables, unleſs hook'd in by long tedious conſequences, which as the Law never intended, ſo neither is one of a thouſand able to deduce them from it, as appears in the inſtances of Gratitude to Benefactors, Love to Enemys, Forgiveneſs of Injurys, Humility and the like, which are excellences of the *firſt Magnitude* in the Imperial conſtitutions of Nature, but not tranſcribed in the Copy and Extract of *Moſes*, as too refined for the groſsneſs of that Age, for the hardneſs of the Jewiſh people, and for the Infancy of that Diſpenſation.

26. This therefore was reſerv'd for the work of a Diviner Prophet, who ſhould retrieve the Law of Nature to the full, and reſtore it as at the Beginning. For he came (as he teſtifys of himſelf, and as was before obſerv'd to another purpoſe) to fill up Moſes his Law, which implies that it was imperfect and Mat. 5. 17.

deficient; and wherein ſhould its defectiveneſs conſiſt, but in wanting ſomthing of the *Natural* Law. The Chriſtian Law therefore is only the Law of Nature retriev'd.

27. This being premiſed, 'tis but now to conſider what the formal notion of the Law of Nature is, and we have found out one *general* meaſure whereby to judge of the Reaſonableneſs of the *Chriſtian* Law. Now by the Law of Nature I ſuppoſe we all underſtand certain Practical Maxims or Dictates, the obſerving or tranſgreſſing of which, conſidering the preſent ſyſtem of the univerſe, have a *natural* connexion with the well or ill being of man, either as to his *private* or *political* capacity. I ſay, conſidering the *preſent ſyſtem* of the univerſe. For no queſtion, God might have ſo contrived the Order and Scheme of the Creation, as that many of thoſe things which are now for the *intereſt*, might have been for the *diſintereſt* of mankind, as he might have ſo framed the texture of a human body, that what is now wholſome and ſoveraign, might have been poiſonous and pernicious; and in this reſpect I conceive the Law of Nature may be ſaid to *depend* upon the arbitrary will of God, and to be *mutable* at his pleaſure. But yet it ſtill remains immutably true in the *general*, that whatſoever has ſuch a natural ordination to or connexion with the well or ill being of mankind, is good or evil reſpectively. This is the ſtandard

of

of morality and immorality, and the eſſential difference between Vertue and Vice. And 'tis as immutably true that ſome *particular* inſtances ſhould have ſuch a natural connexion, *ſtante rerum Hypotheſi*, during the preſent ſtate and order of things. Now whatever has ſo, is an eſſential branch of the Law of Nature, and obliges us to act or not to act reſpectively to the *Term* of its Ordination. So that *Bonum honeſtum* is that which in the order of things is *Bonum utile*, and conduces as a *Natural Medium* to Felicity, which is the End of man.

28. Hence then it follows, that the Chriſtian Law which is nothing elſe but the Law of Nature retriev'd, conſiſts only of ſuch practical maxims, which carry a *natural* relation to the true intereſt and well being of mankind, and conſequently contains nothing in it but what is reaſonable, very reaſonable to be done. But to evince this more particulary 'twill be requiſite to take a curſory view of the Chriſtian Law. And this I ſhall conſider firſt, as I find it ſumm'd up in general by our B. Saviour in anſwer to the Lawyers Queſtion, what he ſhould do to inherit eternal life, and ſecondly, in ſome of thoſe particular inſtances of it which ſeem *moſt* to croſs the preſent intereſt of mankind.

29. As to the 1ſt, the ſumme which our B. Saviour gave of it was this: *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy mind,* Mat. 22. 37. Mark 12. 30. Luke 10. 27.

and

and thy Neighbor as thy ſelf. Theſe he told him were the two great Commandments, and that there were none greater than theſe: and certainly none more *reaſonable.* For ſince man is not his own end, but has an *Amorous Principle* within him which tranſports him to good without himſelf, ſince he is not a *Central* and *ſelf-terminating* Being, but by the weight of his affections gravitates and inclines to ſomthing *further*, what is more Reaſonable than that he fix upon *God* as his *Center*, who is as well the *End* as the *Author* of his Being? And ſince whatever portion of his love is not directed hither, will neceſſarily light (for it cannot be idle, and muſt fix ſomwhere) upon diſproportionate and vain Objects, which neither *deſerve* it nor can *ſatisfy* it, and conſequently will but vex and torment him, what can be more Reaſonable than that he *unite* and *concenter* all the rays of his affection both Intellectual and ſenſitive upon God, and according to the *ſtricteſt* ſenſe of this great Commandment love him with all his heart, Soul and mind? *Viſion* and *Love* make up the full compoſition of our Celeſtial Happineſs hereafter, and they are the neareſt approach we can make to it here.

30. Nor is the 2d great Commandment leſs reaſonable than the firſt. The trueſt and moſt effectual way a man can take to love himſelf, is to love his neighbor as himſelf. For ſince man is a neceſſitous and indigent Creature (of all Crea-

Creatures the moſt indigent) and ſince he cannot upon his own ſolitary ſtock ſupply the neceſſitys of his nature (the want of Society being one of them) and ſince of all Creatures here below none is capable of doing him either ſo much *good* or ſo much *harm* as thoſe of his own ſpecies, as 'twill be his beſt *ſecurity* to have as many Friends and as few Enemys as he can, ſo, as a means to this, to hate and injure none, but to love and oblige all, will be his beſt *Policy*. So far is the ſtate of Nature from being (according to the Elements of the *Leviathan*) a ſtate of Hoſtility and war, that there is no one thing that makes more apparently for the intereſt of mankind than univerſal Charity and Benevolence. And indeed, would all men but once agree to eſpouſe one anothers intereſts and proſecute the public good truly and faithfully, nothing would be wanting to verify and realize the Dreams of the Golden Age, to anticipate the *Millennial* Happineſs, and bring down Heaven upon Earth. Society would ſtand firm and compact, like a *Mathematical frame of Architecture*, ſupported by mutual dependencys and coherences, and every man's kindneſſes would return again upon himſelf in the *Circle* and *Reciprocation* of Love.

31. But beſides this Conſideration of *Intereſt*, there is another which equally contributes to recommend this Law of univerſal Benevolence, and perhaps with more ſweetneſs of inſinua-

tion

tion than the former, and that is Pleaſure. Theſe two are put together by the Pſalmiſt, who tells us, that *'tis both good and pleaſant for Brethren to dwell together in unity.* There is certainly a moſt Divine pleaſure in the acts and expreſſes of Benevolence, ſo that if God may be ſaid to take pleaſure in any one thing beſides the richneſs of his own infinity, it muſt be in the *Communication* of it. Sure I am, no man can do good to another without recreating and feaſting his own ſpirit; nay, even the moſt happy and ſelf-ſufficient man who as to his *intereſt* has the leaſt need to be kind and obliging, yet as to his *Pleaſure* has the greateſt. For he enjoys his happy ſtate moſt when he communicates it, and takes a Partner with him into his Paradiſe, and receives a more vigorous joy from the *Reflexion*, than from the *Direct incidency* of his Happineſs.

Pſal. 133. 1.

32. I might here take occaſion to ſhew the Reaſonableneſs of Juſtice and Honeſty, with other particular Branches of this great Law, but the neceſſity of theſe is ſo *notorious* (no Society being able to ſubſiſt without them) and withall ſo *atteſted* by the common vote and experience of the world (it being the buſineſs of all human Laws, and the end of all Civil Government, to engage men to the obſervance of them) that I ſhall not need to make any Plea in their behalf. Inſtead therefore of lending any further light to what ſhines already ſo conſpi-

conſpicuouſly by its own, I ſhall now proceed to juſtify the Chriſtian Law in ſome of thoſe inſtances which ſeem *moſt* to croſs the preſent intereſt of mankind.

33. There are ſome Precepts of the Chriſtian Law which ſeem *directly* and in their *whole* kind to be againſt the intereſt of man. (For as for thoſe which may *accidentally* and in ſome junctures of Circumſtances, I ſhall conſider them afterwards.) Now theſe I ſhall derive from that Abſtract of Chriſtian Philoſophy the divine Sermon on the Mount. The 1ſt inſtance ſhall be in the Precept of Meekneſs, which our Divine Lawgiver has extended ſo far as τῷ πονηρῷ μὴ ἀντῆναι, that we reſiſt not evil; which is not to be underſtood in Prejudice either of the Civil ſword, or of legal Proſecutions for the reparation of injurys (for this would be to give the worſt of men a continual advantage againſt the beſt) nor of public wars between diſtinct kingdoms (for they being under no common juriſdiction, have no other expedient whereby to right themſelves when injured) but only as to *Private* perſons, who by vertue of this Precept are not permitted (unleſs in apparent danger of life, for then the Law of ſelf-preſervation takes place, the Benefit of other laws being not at hand) I ſay are not permitted to retaliate evil, but obliged rather with their Divine Maſter to *give their backs to the ſmiters, and their* Mat. 5. 39. Iſai. 50. 6.

cheeks

cheeke to them that pluck off the hair.

34. Now this may ſeem a very diſadvantagious and inconvenient command, in as much as it may be ſaid by tying up our hands, to expoſe us to all manner of contumelies and affronts, and invite the ill treatments of rude and diſingenious ſpirits. But whoever ſeriouſly conſiders the matter will find, that pure and ſimple revenge is a thing very abſurd, and very productive of ill conſequences, and in ſome reſpects, worſe than the *firſt* injury. For *that* may have ſome ends of profit and advantage in it, but to do another man a diskindneſs merely becauſe he has done me one, ſerves to no good purpoſe, and to many ill ones. For it contributes nothing to the reparation of the firſt injury (it being impoſſible that the *Act* of any wrong ſhould be reſcinded, tho the *permanent effect* may) but inſtead of making up the breach of my *Happineſs*, it increaſes the objects of my *Pity*, by bringing in a *new* miſery into the world more than was before, and occaſions freſh returns of malice, one begetting another like the *encirclings* of diſturb'd water, till the evil becomes fruitful and multiplies into a long ſucceſſion, a *Genealogy* of miſchiefs. And by this time I think the man has reaſon to repent him of his Revenge, and to be convinc'd of the Equity of the Law which forbids it.

35. The next inſtance I ſhall mention, is that of loving *enemies*. This runs higher than the former,

former, that being only negative, not to return evil, but this positive to do good. A strange precept one would think, and highly contradictory to *Reason* as well as *Nature*. But whoever considers the great usefulness of Love and Benevolence to the interest of Society, will quickly perceive, that he ought not to be disingaged from the observance of so necessary a Duty upon so slight a ground as anothers default in it. I grant 'tis neither Reasonable nor possible to love an enemy for being so, (that is no proper motive of love) but yet 'tis very reasonable to love the *man* notwithstanding his *enmity*. Because the necessity of Charity is so indispensable, that it ought to oblige in *all* cases. And besides, as by this means all enmity is certainly prevented on one side (which is of very great consideration to the public peace) so is it the likelyest method to bring over the other. Kindnesses will at length prevail upon him, who is proof against all the sense of Duty and Conscience, and the coals of fire which are heap'd upon his head (when nothing else will do it) will melt him down into Love and Sweetness.

36. There is one instance more, wherein the Christian Law seems not to consult the interest of human life, and that is in the matter of *Divorce*, which our Saviour allows in no case but that of Adultery. Now this also seems to be one of the *hard sayings*. For the natural propen-

sion

ſion to procreation is not to be ſatisfy'd *out* of marriage, and marriage by this appendage ſeems to be ſuch a Burthen, that the Diſciples might well ſay, *if the caſe of a man be ſo with his wife, it is not good to marry.* But yet upon conſideration, this alſo will appear to be a very Reaſonable confinement. For 1ſt, all the ſuppoſable inconveniences of this reſtraint may be in a great meaſure prevented by prudent and wiſe Choice. But ſuppoſe they cannot, yet 2ly, as 'twould be moſt adviſable for *ſome* men to marry tho with this reſtraint, ſo is marriage with this reſtraint better for *Society* than without it. For were there liberty of divorce upon other grounds, every petty diſlike would never want a pretence for a *Diſſolution*, and then the ſame inconveniences would enſue as if there were no ſuch thing as the matrimonial Inſtitution, ſuch as diminution of affection to children, neglect of their education and the like; beſides the perpetual quarrels and animoſitys between the parties themſelves ſo divided, and their reſpective relatives, all which would bring more inconveniencys upon Society, than thoſe which are pretended to be avoided by diſtending and *enlarging* the licence of Divorce.

Mat. 19.10.

37. Now if to this Apology for the reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity taken from its conducivenes and natural tendency to the intereſt of Human life, we further add, the Dominion and

and Right that God has over us, the great Benefits wherewith he has already prevented us, and the exceeding weight of glory laid up in Reversion for us; And would we further consider, that Holiness has a natural Ordination to the Happiness of *Heaven* as well as of *Earth*, that 'tis among the τὰ ἐχόμενα σωτηρίας, Heb. 6. 9. the things that *accompany* or are essentially retaining to Salvation, so that would God in mercy dispense with it as a *Conditionary*, yet we could not be happy without it as a *natural* Qualification for Heaven; Further yet, would we consider the great *easiness* as well as manifold advantage of Christianity, that many instances of Duty are agreeable to the inclinations of Nature, and that where there *is* a Law in our members that runs counter to that of the mind, we have the aids and assistances of *grace*; that God has required nothing of us but what is *substantially* within the verge and compass of Human nature; For to *believe*, *repent* and *love*, are all natural acts, we believe some storys, we repent of some follys, we love some men, and God obliges us but to believe *him*, to repent of follys against *him*, and to love *him*. The Acts are the same for their *substance*, tho not in their *determination*. Lastly, would we consider how much all this is confirm'd by the Argument of *Practice* and *Experience*, that the Devil has more Apostates than Christ, that the number of those who leave sin, and come

over to vertue, is much greater than of those that leave vertue and come over to sin, (which is the Apology that the Platonist *Simplicius* makes for vertue) the Conclusion would be placed beyond the reach of controversy that Christianity is a *Reasonable Service*, and that the Precepts of our excellent Lawgiver both begin, continue and end with a *Beatitude*.

38. I can now foresee but one Objection of any moment which the Argument of this Discourse is liable to, which is, that altho vertue and vice have a natural ordination to the Happiness and Misery of life respectively, yet it may so happen by the intervening of some accidents, that this connexion of things may be broken off, and that a man may be a loser by vertue, and a gainer by vice, as in the instances of *martyrdom* and *secure theft*. And here the Question will be, whether it be then reasonable to act vertuously and unreasonable to do the contrary. To this I answer, 1st that it may be justly question'd (notwithstanding the intervention of any accidents) whether a man may be vertuous to his disadvantage, or vicious to his advantage, even as to *this present* state, considering the internal satisfaction and acquiescence, or dissatisfaction and molestation of spirit that attend the practice of vertue and vice respectively. But supposing he may, then 2ly I reply, that here come in the rewards and punishments of another life to supply the natural sanction

ſanction of the law. Then 3ly, to the ſecond inſtance I offer this in peculiar, that altho in ſome circumſtances I might be diſhoneſt to my preſent gain, yet 'tis very reaſonable that all ſhould be obliged to the law of Juſtice. Becauſe if every one ſhould be permitted to uſe ſecret Frauds (and all may as well as one) the evil would come about again, even to him whom we juſt now ſuppoſed a gainer by his theft, and as to the public 'twould be all one as if there were no *Property*, and then for want of *encouragement* and *ſecurity*, the final iſſue of the matter would be an utter neglect and diſimprovement of the Earth, and a continual diſturbance of the public peace. So that when all's done *Honeſty is the beſt Policy*, and to live moſt happily is to live moſt vertuouſly and religiouſly. So true is that of the Pſalmiſt, *I ſee that all things come to an end, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad.* Pſal. 119.

39. From what has been hitherto diſcours'd, I ſhall now briefly deduce ſome practical inferences and conclude. Since then our Religion is ſo Reaſonable a Service, 'twill follow hence in the firſt place, that there may be a due exerciſe and uſe of *Reaſon* in *divine* matters, and that whatſoever is apparently contrary to *Reaſon* ought not to be obtruded as of *Divine Authority*, nor be accounted as any part of the *Chriſtian* Religion. An Inference wherein the Faith of the Church of *Rome* is not a little concern'd.

40. 'Twill follow 2ly, that no man ought to be perſecuted, or have any external violence done him for his *Religion*, ſuppoſing that by *overt* acts he give no diſturbance to the *Public*. For ſince God has required nothing of us but what is agreeable to our Reaſon, why ſhould man?

41. 'Twill follow 3ly, that ſin is the very Height and Extremity of *Folly* and *Diſingenuity*. Of *Folly*, becauſe it croſſes and defeats the excellent end of Man, which is to live happily and commodiouſly. And of *Diſingenuity*, becauſe 'tis committed againſt him, who when he might by vertue of his ſupream Dominion have impoſed upon us *arbitrary* Laws, (as that given to *Adam*) or *hard* and ſevere ones (as that to *Abraham*) has been graciouſly pleas'd to make nothing the Condition of our Happineſs, but what upon *other* accounts would have been moſt adviſable to be done. This certainly will render ſin *exceeding ſinful*, and leave the *ſinner* without the leaſt ſhadow of an excuſe. We commonly derive the aggravations of ſin from the *greatneſs* of God, but without queſtion his *goodneſs* will ſupply us with as many, and in this ſenſe alſo 'twill be true to ſay, *as is his Majeſty, ſo is his Mercy*.

42. Laſtly hence 'twill follow, that we ought to perform this *Rational* will of God with *Angelical* alacrity and conſtancy, partly for its own excellency as 'tis a perſuance of our intereſt, and

and partly out of gratitude and generosity to God, for giving us such excellent Laws, in keeping of which there is *so great Reward*. For not only the *End* of our Religion is Happiness, but even her *very ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace*. *Quintilian* I remember, inquiring why former ages afforded better *Oratours* than the latter, resolves the Problem into this, because there were then greater encouragements and rewards. And if great encouragements will make good *Orators*, why should they not make good *men?* Let us then make it our daily *endeavour* as we do our daily *Prayer*, that this excellent will of God may be done here on *Earth* as it is in *Heaven*, and the more we do so, the more we shall still be convinc'd that it is *our Reasonable Service*. Prov. 3. 17.

A DISCOURSE CONCERNING *PERSEVERANCE* IN HOLINESS.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

PERSEVERANCE

IN

HOLINESS.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Perſeverance in Holineſs.

1. ALL that is of any moment for the full Diſcharging of this Subject, will be abſolv'd in theſe three Conſiderations. 1ſt, that man has one way or other ſufficient power to perſevere in a courſe of Holineſs if he will; otherwiſe all exhortations would be in *vain*. 2ly, that 'tis alſo poſſible for him to fall from a ſtate of Holineſs; otherwiſe they would all be *ſuperfluous*. And laſtly, by ſhewing him what vaſt encouragements, what infinite engagements he has to ſtand.

2. I begin with the firſt, that man has one way or other ſufficient power to perſevere in a courſe of Holineſs if he will. Where by *Perſeverance*, I do not underſtand a continuedly uniform, equal courſe of obedience, and ſuch as is not interrupted with the leaſt act of ſin, (for this is a perfection not to be hoped for, under the *diſadvantages* of *mortality*) but only ſuch a conſtancy of obedience as excludes all *contrary Habits*, and likewiſe all *ſuch acts* of ſin as are ſaid

ſaid directly to waſt the Conſcience, thoſe I mean, which are committed againſt the clear and expreſs Dictate either of natural Reaſon, or ſupernatural Revelation. And withall (to compleat the Character) ſuch an Obedience as is attended with a ſedulous care and hearty endeavour to correct and ſubdue even thoſe *pittiable* infirmitys, which can never be *wholly* put off in this ſtate, but will always adhere like *ſpots* to the *brighteſt Star* in the *Firmament*. This I conceive to be all one with that diſpoſition of Soul which with more compendiouſneſs we uſually call *ſincerity*, in oppoſition to a *perfect* and *ſinleſs* obedience. Now that man has ſufficient power to perſevere in ſuch a courſe of life as is here deſcribed, (not to call in the aſſiſtance of any other Argument) ſeems to me evidently demonſtrable from this ſingle conſideration, that to be *found* in the ſtate above mention'd is the condition of the *New-Covenant*, upon the fulfilling of which, all our hopes of Pardon and Salvation depend. I do not ſay 'tis the indiſpenſable Condition of our Salvation, that we perſevere *uninterruptedly* even in this ſtate of *Evangelical Righteouſneſs* (it being poſſible for a man after an interruption of a ſalvable ſtate to recover into it again, as is plain from the caſe of David, St. Peter and many others) but that we be *found finally* in this ſtate *is* the Condition of our Salvation. *For if the Righteous man turneth away from his Righteouſneſs, and com-*

committeth iniquity: and dies in them, the righteousneſs that he hath done ſhall not be mention'd, in the ſin that he hath ſinn'd ſhall he dye. Well then, if Salvation be not to be had *out* of this ſtate, then it follows, that it muſt never become impoſſible to a man without his own fault to be found *in it*, ſince 'tis repugnant to the very nature of a Covenant (much more of this great Covenant of *mercy*) to have a condition annex'd to it, which in *ſome* circumſtances, and that *without our fault* may prove *impoſſible*.

3. The Condition then of this new Covenant muſt be as poſſible to man in this ſtate of degeneracy, now his *locks are ſhaven and his great ſtrength is departed from him*, as the Condition of the firſt Covenant was to him in his primitive might and vigour. *Do this and live*, is equally common to both, the only difference lies in the *This* that is to be *done*, not in the *poſſibility* of the *performance*. Or if there are degrees of poſſibility, the advantage ought to lie on this ſide, this being (as was hinted before) a Covenant of *Grace* and *Mercy*.

4. Well then, if to be found finally in the ſtate above deſcrib'd be the indiſpenſable condition of our Salvation, and if for that very reaſon (as it has been prov'd) it muſt not in any circumſtance become impoſſible without our fault, it unavoidably follows, that 'tis alſo poſſible to *perſevere in it without interruption*, becauſe otherwiſe we having not the diſpoſal of

our

our own lives, it will oftentimes prove impoſſible for us (and that without our own fault) to be found *finally* in that ſtate which is the Condition of Salvation; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. The ſhort is (to ſpeak all in a word) the poſſibility of being *found* in a ſalvable ſtate cannot be ſufficiently ſecured, without a poſſibility of always *perſevering in it*, and therefore I conclude it poſſible for a man to do ſo, which was the thing I undertook to prove.

5. But now leſt man upon a ſurvey of his natural ſtrength, and of the Auxiliarys of the Divine grace, ſhould pronounce himſelf abſolutely impregnable, and ſhould begin to ſay in his heart (as the Pſalmiſt did in another caſe) *I ſhall never be remov'd, thou Lord of thy goodneſs haſt made my hill ſo ſtrong*, 'tis high time to turn the *Perſpective*, and give him a more near, full and diſtinct view of his Condition, that inſtead of *ſtretching* himſelf upon the *bed of ſecurity*, he may learn to work out his Salvation with *fear and trembling*. Which we ſhall do, by advancing to the 2d thing propoſed, which is, that altho man has ſufficient power to perſevere if he will, yet 'tis alſo poſſible for him to fall from a ſtate of Holineſs. *Navigat enim adhuc*, for he is ſtill *upon the waters*, and tho with the uſe of diligence and prudent conduct he may decline both *rocks* and *ſhallows*, yet if he venture to *ſleep* within the veſſel which he ſhould *govern*, upon a groundleſs preſumption that an

Angel

Angel will be his *Pilot*, and that he ſhall be infallibly ſteer'd to the right Point by the arm of Omnipotence, he may notwithſtanding the *paſt* ſucceſs of his voyage, and his *confidence* of the *future*, be ſhipwrackt even within *ſight* of the *Haven*.

6. I confeſs, when I conſider with what ſtrength and combination of Argument Chriſtianity both as to *Faith* and *Practice* does approve it ſelf to be the moſt Rational thing in the world, when I conſider the nobleneſs of its *Original* (God being its Author) the excellency of its *nature* (it being moſt agreeable to, and perfective of our beſt facultys) its wholſome *effects* and operations (the intereſts of Kingdoms and States as well as of private perſons depending upon it) and laſtly, the greatneſs of its *End*, which is no leſs than everlaſting Bliſs and Happineſs, I ſay when I conſider all this, I am ready to conclude it the moſt prodigious thing in nature that ſo very *few* ſhould be in love with the *Beauty* of *Holineſs*, were I not immediatly ſurpriſed with a *greater* Miracle, which is, that many of *thoſe few* after ſome conſiderable progreſs in vertue retract their *beſt* choice, and after the good Angel has brought them within ſight of the *Mountain of Safety*, look back upon the Region of wickedneſs.

7. This certainly is a Condition no leſs *ſtrange* than *deplorable*, and calls for our *wonder* as well as our *Pity*. 'Tis true indeed, ignorance of the

ſweets

ſweets of Religion may ſomething leſſen the wonder of not embracing it, and the *Food* of *Angels* may lye neglected on the ground ſo long as men *wiſt* not what it is, but for thoſe who are once *enlightned, and have taſted of the Heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come*, one would think it as *difficult* for ſuch to fall away, as the Apoſtle aſſures us 'tis to *renew them again to Repentance.*

8. But ſuch is the imperfection and unſtedfaſtneſs of Human Nature that from the beginning of things there have been inſtances of this kind. *Paradiſe* could not preſerve man in his innocence, and the *Garden of the Lord* degenerated into a *Wilderneſs*. Neither is this to be obſerv'd only in *man*, who ſits in the loweſt form of Intellectual Beings, but the very *Angels* alſo, who are greater in power and might are *charged with Folly* for leaving their *own habitation*. Thoſe bright ſons of the morning could not long *endure* to be Happy, but grew *giddy* with the ſublimity of their ſtation and fell from the *Heights* of Glory. And altho the bleſſed inhabitants of that ſerene and peaceful manſion are now (as 'tis piouſly believ'd) fully confirm'd in *Holineſs* and *Happineſs*, yet man like this ſublunary Region which falls to his lot to inherit, is ſtill nothing elſe but a Scene of Changes and Revolutions, but in no-

Job 4. 18.

thing

thing ſo changeable, as in that wherein he ought to be moſt fixt, the practice of *Vertue and Religion*. 'Tis a narrow and a rugged path, and he that treads ſureſt is not ſecure from falling.

9. This will plainly appear to him that conſiders, that no Habit tho contracted by never ſo great a repetition of acts does *neceſſitate* the faculty, but only diſpoſes it to act with greater *facility*, and conſequently leaves it ſtill indifferent to oppoſite operations. Whence 'tis eaſy to conceive, that an Habit of Holineſs may by degrees be aboliſh'd by contrary actions. For as this Habit was at firſt *begotten* by frequent acts, ſo may it be *deſtroy'd* by oppoſite ones, and (what is more) a contrary Habit may be at length produced.

10. This I ſay is very poſſible in the *ordinary* courſe of things, and that God ſhould interpoſe here with an *irreſiſtible* power to prevent it, we have no grounds from *Scripture* or *reaſon* to expect, and therefore 'twou'd be a moſt intolerable preſumption to rely upon it. *My grace is ſufficient for thee* was the utmoſt degree of conſolation vouchſafed to the *choſen Veſſel*: He had God's faithfulneſs engaged for it, that he ſhould not be tempted above his ſtrength, but yet notwithſtanding this *ſufficiency*, it muſt have been poſſible for him to have fall'n from his *own ſtedfaſtneſs*, otherwiſe I cannot imagine to what purpoſe he ſhould ὑπωπιάζειν τὸ σῶμα, *keep under his body, and bring it into ſubjection*, and all

all for this reason, *lest that by any means when he had preacht to others, he himself should be a cast-away.*

11. What, did the *Angels* let fall their Crowns of glory, and shall *man* pretend to *Indefectibility?* Indeed the *Platonists* tell us of an order of Beings call'd νόες, ἔναδες and αὐτοαγαθότητες, *minds, units* and *self-goodnesses*, whom they suppose to be the closest *draught* of their Maker, and the *Master-piece* of the whole Creation. And these they say are *essentially* and in their own nature *immutable*, and the reason that they assign for it is, because they are pure, uncompounded spirits, and utterly abstract from matter. And altho these are the only Creatures which they affirm to be *essentially* immutable, yet they allow a *gift* or *Priviledge* of Perseverance to certain men. But then they are such as (according to their Hypothesis of Pre-existence) were not sent down into these bodys for any *faults* committed in another state, but who came hither either out of generosity, or by divine dispensation to be guides and examples of *Heroic* vertue in the world. And these they say are secure of remaining good and vertuous, and of returning to their native Country again.

12. Now as to the first opinion of theirs, I can by no means make it part of my *Creed*. For to be *essentially* immutable, I take to be the incommunicable property of the Father of Lights *with whom is no variableness or shadow of turning,*

ing, and who is the same yesterday, to day and for ever. No Creature how excellent soever can lay claim to this divine prerogative. And this I find acknowledg'd by a Person of great worth, and one who in other points was very *Platonically* given; But here he has deserted his Master, as is to be seen in his Book περὶ ἀρχῶν. And the generality of Christian writers seem to conspire with *Origen* in this, inasmuch as they hold not only a Lapse of Angels in *general*, but withall suppose him who is *now* the *Prince of Devils*, to have been *once* an Angel of the *highest* Order. lib. 1. c. 8.

13. As to their latter opinion (not to meddle with the *Hypothesis* upon which 'tis founded) I do not absolutely deny but that to some men who have for a long time given excellent proof of their obedience, and with unwearied resolution fought the Lord's Battels, God may at length vouchsafe such a plentiful portion of grace and so stablish them with his *Free Spirit*, that they shall never depart from him, partly to reward their *past fidelity*, and partly, that they may become *burning lamps* to give *constant* light in the *Temple* of God. For since 'tis confess'd on all hands, that God by way of *punishment* does withdraw his grace from some *obstinate* sinners, and give them up after a long abuse of his mercy to the fulfilling of their own lusts, 'tis but what the Analogy of reason requires, to suppose on the other hand that God

may be ſo favourable to ſome of his moſt eminent ſervants, who have for a long time well acquitted themſelves in the ſevereſt trials, as at length to *give his Angels a peculiar charge over them to keep them in all their ways*. And this ſuppoſition ſeems not a little countenanc'd from what the Spirit ſays to the Church of Philadelphia, *Becauſe thou haſt kept the word of my Patience, I alſo will keep thee from the hour of temptation which ſhall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

Rev. 3. 10.

14. But altho this be granted, yet it makes nothing againſt our preſent aſſertion, as every one muſt acknowledg that attends to theſe two Conſiderations. 1ſt, that theſe are *extraordinary* inſtances of the Divine favour, vouchſafed only to *extraordinary perſons*, and to *extraordinary purpoſes*, and conſequently when we treat of Gods *ordinary* dealings with the ſons of men, muſt not come into computation. And 2ly, that even theſe extraordinary perſons whom we ſuppoſe to be at length thus *highly favour'd*, were notwithſtanding for a great part of their lives in a *defectible* condition, and that they are now no longer ſo, is ſuppoſed to be the *reward* of their *paſt* fidelity, ſo that they may ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *This I had becauſe I kept thy Commandments.*

Pſal. 119.

15. What hinders then, but that it be concluded poſſible for the *generality* of men at *all* times, and for *all* men at *ſome* times to fall from

R

a ſtate of Holineſs, and after they have taſted the *liberty of the ſons of God*, to become again the *ſervants of corruption*? And ſure thoſe that aſſert the contrary deſtroy not only the excellency, but the nature of obedience, defeat and evacuate the deſign of all Scripture exhortations, which would be as impertinent upon their ſuppoſition, as to exhort him to *continue* to live who is *Immortal*, pervert the order of things, arrogating to themſelves in this ſtate of *Probation* the portion of *confirm'd* Saints, and laſtly aſſume to themſelves more, than many of the great Maſters of Theology will allow to our B. Saviour himſelf in the days of his fleſh. Did our Saviour ſeem to *ſhrink* at the apprehenſion of his ſad hour, and to be at a *ſtand* whether he ſhould drink off his bitter cup? Did his danger ſeem ſo conſiderable, that he was fain to betake himſelf to his great *Antidote Prayer*, and *borrow* courage from the conſolation of an Angel? And does *mere* man ſit careleſs and unconcern'd, ſecure of the iſſues of eternity? See the *indecorum*, the Lord is in his Agony, & the Diſciples *ſleep on and take their reſt*. But I think I have ſaid enough to awaken them out of their dangerous ſlumber, and to convince them that all is not ſo ſafe as they *dream*, and that notwithſtanding the preſent firmneſs of their ſtation, there is ſtill left a poſſibility of falling.

16. But now leſt this poſſibility of falling be reduced to act, I proceed to conſider the vaſt

encouragements, the infinite engagements that he who is Holy has to be holy ſtill. And theſe I ſhall chuſe to repreſent to him in theſe two general Conſiderations. 1ſt, that he has made the *beſt* choice that he could poſſibly have made, and conſequently, 'tis againſt all the reaſon in the world that he ſhould *reſcind* it. And aly, that if notwithſtanding he does reſcind it, he will not only loſe the *advantage* of his beſt choice, but incur an oppoſite portion of miſery, and that in a *greater meaſure* than *other ſinners*. Theſe I take to be the moſt proper Conſiderations to inforce the grand Duty of Perſeverance.

17. The conſequence of the firſt Argument proceeds upon this Principle, that that choice which is beſt is not to be reſcinded. This Propoſition is ſo evident that it can hardly *admit*, much leſs *need* any proof, and 'tis practically confeſs'd by every man throughout the whole tenour of his life. For no man retracts his choice 'till he has alter'd the Dictate of his underſtanding (for otherwiſe he would chuſe evil under the very Formality of evil) and has entertain'd other apprehenſions of the object than he had when he firſt choſe it. And this is that which makes up the entire notion of *Repentance*, which is nothing elſe in its *preciſe Idea*, when abſtracted from *particular* matter, but a *Retractation* of a former choice, proceeding from the alteration of the Practical Dictate, diſallowing that now,

now, which was before approv'd. For this a man never does 'till he thinks he has reaſon to do ſo. And upon this account 'tis, that God is ἀμεταμέλητος and cannot properly *repent*, becauſe his underſtanding being infinite and reaching out to all the poſſibilitys of things, muſt needs dictate to his will after *one uniform* and conſtant manner, it being impoſſible he ſhould either diſcover ſomthing *afterward* which he did not comprehend at *firſt*, or *loſe* the apprehenſion of ſomthing which he *did*. But the underſtanding of man being finite and imperfect at the beſt, and oftentimes corrupted and biaſs'd by the Paſſions, has at ſeveral times different apprehenſions of things, and being ſomtimes *under* and ſomtimes *out of the cloud*, dictates to the will as the Sun ſhines upon the Earth, with a *diſuniform* and *unequal* light. Whereupon (as it frequently happens in Courts and Senates) many Decrees are enacted, which at the next *Seſſion* are repeal'd again, tho with this unhappineſs, that ſomtimes her ſecond thoughts are worſe than her firſt, and that ſhe ſomtimes retracts that which ſhe ſhould perſevere in, as well as perſeveres in that which ſhe ſhould retract. But whatever the Retractation *really* be, 'twas always *thought* for the *beſt* when *made*, ſo that he that repents him of his *Holineſs*, as well as he that repents him of his *ſin*, does it upon the change of his Practical Dictate, judging that not to be beſt now, which before

was ſo pronounc'd, and conſequently, they both own the Truth of the forementiond Principle, that that choice which is beſt is not to be reſcinded.

18. This being firm, all the buſineſs in queſtion now will be, whether he that is Holy has made the beſt choice or no. And if it ſhall appear that he has, then by the Principle juſt now laid down he ought not, nay he cannot be ſo much a *Contradiction* to himſelf as to reſcind it. Now to convince him that he has made the beſt choice, I deſire him to conſider, 1ſt that he has choſen that which God had choſen for him before, ſo that his choice ſtands recommended to him by the *Authority* of infinite and unerring wiſdom. And this is foundation enough to warrant a *certain* (tho *implicit*) perſwaſion that it muſt needs be beſt for him. I ſay beſt for *him*, for God being already poſſeſs'd of all poſſible perfection, cannot act any thing for any *ſelf-advantage*, and therefore whatſoever he does is for the good of his *Creatures*. For there is this difference (as *Divine Plato* excellently well obſerves) between the *Divine* love and *created* love, that the one ſprings from *Indigency*, and the other from *fullneſs* and *redundancy*. And therefore as God did not at firſt ſpeak this world into being, to raiſe himſelf a monument of *Power* and divine *Architecture*, ſo neither does he govern the *Rational* part of it by the Precepts of Religion out of any *ſelf-deſign*,

as

as if he feasted his nostrils with the perfumes of the Altar, or his ears with the accents of an Hallelujah. *For can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous? or is it gain to him that thou makest thy way perfect?* Job. 22. No certainly, and therefore when he chalk'd out the ways of Righteousness and Holiness for man to walk in, it could not be for any *self end*, but purely for the good of *man*, and consequently (if infinite wisdom be to be trusted) it must be his best choice to be *Holy*.

19. Secondly let him consider, that the Practice of Religion consults a man's *whole* interest, and partly of its own nature and partly by divine constitution, tends to make him happy in *all* his capacitys, and consequently must needs be his *best* choice. As for impious and unjust Practises, if they do at any time promote a man's *private* and *secular* interest, yet 'tis always both at the expence of the *public*, and of his own *eternal* welfare, and then, *what will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own Soul?* But now this is the peculiar *gain* of *godliness*, that it has the promise both of this life and of that which is to come, that it conduces to our advantage both *here* and *hereafter*. *Interest* and *Duty* are immediatly link'd together in this life, and every Vertue has a *natural Sanction* of Reward and Punishment respectively attending

it, as I could eaſily demonſtrate, but that it has been already done by many excellent hands, and particularly with *Mathematic* evidence by a late writer of our own. *Dr. Cumberland.*

And altho it happen ſomtimes through the unreaſonableneſs and injuſtice of men that Duty and Intereſt *interfere*, and that Vertue be defeated of the Portion ſhe is *naturally* endow'd with, yet ſhe ſhall recover her own again at the great Aſſize, at the *day of the revelation of the righteous Judgments of God.* And altho inſtead of being *rewarded* it be our fortune to *ſuffer* for righteouſneſs ſake, yet we Chriſtians know that it entitles us to one of our Saviours *Beatitudes*, and we are alſo well aſſured from one whoſe caſe it was to be ſo dealt with, that *the ſufferings of the preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be reveal'd*, and that *our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us* καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* So that whatever difficulties and hardſhips Religion may ſomtimes engage a man in, yet when the whole account is caſt up, he will find the *Practiſe* of Religion as *gainful*, as the *belief* of it is *rational*, that to be Holy is his beſt choice, and that he has infinite reaſon to pray in the words of Balaam, *Let me die the death of the Righteous, and let my laſt end be like his.*

20. And

20. And now one would think, that one who has ſo great and ſo apparent reaſon for his choice as the Religious man has, ſhould not eaſily be brought to retract it, and ſay with thoſe in Malachi, *it is vain to ſerve God, and what profit is it that I have kept his ordinances?* But becauſe 'tis obſerv'd to be the Nature of Man to be more ſtrongly affected with *Puniſhments* than *Rewards*, I ſhall for his better eſtabliſhment in the purpoſes of Holineſs preſent him with the 2d general Conſideration, which is, that if notwithſtanding the excellency of his choice he does retract it, he will not only loſe the *advantages* of it, but alſo incur an *oppoſite portion of miſery*, and that in *greater* meaſures than other ſinners.

21. That he will loſe the advantages of his firſt and beſt choice, is plain from the whole tenour of the Goſpel, Perſeverance to the end being the expreſs condition of Salvation. And that he will incur an oppoſite portion of miſery, is plain from the double Sanction of Rewards and Puniſhments wherewith God has bound us to the obſervance of his *otherwiſe* ſufficiently profitable Laws. And altho this be ſufficient in the ſevereſt trials to preſerve us from *Apoſtaſy*, and when flames of fire ſurround us to ſecure our footing in the *Holy ground*, yet thus far is but to dye the *common death of ſinners, and to be viſited after the viſitation of the Impenitent. But now if the Lord make a new*

thing,

thing, and the Deſertor of Piety be puniſh'd in a greater meaſure than other ſinners, *then ſhall ye underſtand that this man has provoked the Lord.*

22. And that he ſhall be ſo puniſh'd is the peculiar conſideration which I ſhall now inſiſt upon, and which I prove from the *heinouſneſs* of his crime, *Apoſtaſy* having in it many degrees of evil beyond the *common* ſtate of ſin. *For if after they have eſcaped the Pollutions of the world through the knowledg of the Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worſe with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of Righteouſneſs, than after they have known it to turn from the Holy Commandment deliver'd unto them.*

23. But to repreſent the heinouſneſs of Apoſtaſy a little more particularly, and that this ſin above all others may appear to be *exceeding ſinful*, let me deſire the unthinking man to conſider, 1ſt, that he that falls back from a courſe of holy living, does in a ſpecial manner grieve the holy Spirit of God. He *ſacrilegiouſly* takes that from him which he had once moſt ſolemnly *conſecrated* to his ſervice, he defiles the ſeat of his reſidence, alienates it to *profane* uſes, blots out the *Tetragrammaton* of the Temple, and ſuffers it to be no longer *Holineſs to the Lord.* He diſinherits his God, diſturbs his reſt, and forces him to leave the habitation whereof he had once ſaid, *This ſhall be my reſt for ever, here*

here will I dwell for I have a delight therein. Add to this affront of the H. Spirit that resided in him, that he grieves the Angels that attended him, and with much *concern* and *hopes* minister'd to his Salvation. Those *disappointed* and *unsuccessfull Guardians* with sorrow cry out to one another as the Angels did in the *Jewish Temple*, when through many profanations it was no longer fit for their charge, Μεταβαίνωμεν ἐντεῦθεν let us depart hence. Neither does he disappoint the Tutelar Ministers of his Salvation only, but causes *universal* grief in Heaven. Those kind and compassionate Spirits who before rejoyc'd at his *Repentance and Conversion*, and began to reckon upon the *new accession* they should have to the *Quire* of Heaven, now tune their *Harps* to the *strains of sorrow* and lament the disappointment of their hopes.

Josephus de Bell. Jud. lib. 7.

24. Consider secondly, that to the sin of Apostasy is added the circumstance of *inexcusableness*. The man has enter'd within the *veil*, has seen the inner Beautys of the Holy place, and has been taught the *secrets* of the kingdom, his understanding has been instructed, and his will has been entertain'd, he has given proof of his Powers and abilitys and has conquer'd the *steepest* part of the *Mount* his difficultys lessen and his strength encreases; so that if now he retreat and slide back to the *bottom* of the hill, he has nothing whereby to excuse himself

himſelf either before God or man, but ſtands in the higheſt ſenſe of the phraſe Αυτοκατακριτος *ſelf-condemn'd*. We generally make ſome allowances for the miſcarriages of thoſe who were never *enlightned*, and have had no acquaintance with the ſubſtantial delights of Religion, and the ſatisfaction of ſober counſels, becauſe indeed they *knew no better*, but when we are told that the *wiſeſt of men* after a *cenſure of Vanity* paſs'd upon the *whole Creation*, and a long application of his mind to the excellent Theories of *Moral* and *Divine* Knowledg, was yet toward the *evening* of his life when the Sun drove hard and the *ſhadows encreas'd*, drawn aſide by ſtrange women, and that his wiſdom departed from him like the *Dream* wherein it was given him, this indeed we may *lament*, but cannot *excuſe*.

25. Conſider thirdly, that he who falls from a ſtate of Holineſs muſt needs do ſtrange violence to his *Reaſon*. If he be a *new Convert* he cannot ſure without great reluctancy defile that Temple which he has ſo lately *ſwept* and *garniſh'd*. And if he be a Saint of ſome *conſiderable ſtanding*, ſure he muſt be the more unwilling to break off a *long-dated* innocence for the unſatisfying pleaſure of a moment. For tho (as 'tis well obſerv'd by *Plutarch*) men of deſperate and bankrupt fortunes have little regard to their expences, becauſe ſhould they ſave them the tide of their eſtates wont riſe much the higher,

higher, and ſo they think it impertinent to be *frugal*, when there's no hopes of being *rich*. Yet they that ſee their heaps begin to ſwell, and that they are within the *neighborhood* of wealth, think it worth while to be ſaving and improve their growing ſtock. But then after a long thrift and ſparing, to throw away the hard purchaſe of many years in one *nights gaming*, is one of the Prodigys of Folly and Indiſcretion. And yet this is the very caſe of him that lets go his integrity.

26. Conſider fourthly and laſtly, that the Apoſtate has the greateſt *ingratitude* imaginable to aggravate his folly. Indeed every ſinner is a very ungrateful perſon, becauſe he treſpaſſes againſt his *beſt Friend and Benefactor*, againſt him that made him, againſt him that died for him, and againſt him that follows him with the daily offers of his grace and lays *ſtratagems of mercy* for his reformation. But the *Back ſliding* man ſins againſt greater mercys, endearments and obligations yet. He has liv'd in the ſervice of his Lord, has receiv'd the earneſt of his Spirit, he has been of his Family, nay more, he has been call'd his *Friend*, he has eaten with him at his Table, he has dwelt under the endearments of familiar converſe, he has been with him in his *Banquetting houſe* where *the Banner that was over him was Love*, he has plighted his faith, given his heart and ſaid with Paſſion, *My Beloved is mine and I am his*, ſo that to

turn

turn *Renegade* now is the greateſt baſeneſs and ingratitude conceivable, 'tis to betray his Lord and Maſter after the obligations of Intimacy and *Diſcipleſhip*, 'tis to break the tables of his law after he has been with him on the Mount, and ſeen the *back parts* of his glory.

27. Since therefore the Apoſtate has ſo many peculiar circumſtances to aggravate his crime beyond the guilt of common ſinners, *of how much ſorer puniſhment ſuppoſe ye ſhall he be thought worthy who has thus trodden under foot the Son of God, and has counted the blood of the Covenant wherewith he was ſanctify'd an unholy thing, and has done deſpite to the Spirit of Grace?* which was the laſt general conſideration.

28. What now remains, but that upon a ſerious conſideration of the Premiſes, He that is Holy think himſelf highly concern'd to be Holy ſtill. That he *lift up the hands that hang down, and ſtrengthen the feeble knees*, that he *hold faſt that which he has, that no man take his Crown*, that he *unravel* not his holy vows, nor put himſelf *back* in the accounts of eternity, that he be not frighted or laught out of his Religion, ſince 'tis his beſt and wiſeſt choice, and will be found to be ſo in ſpite of all the profane drollery of *ſuppoſed* wits, in the day when *wiſdom ſhall be juſtify'd of all her wiſdom. For then ſhall the Righteous man ſtand in great boldneſs before the face of ſuch as have afflicted him and made no account of his labours. And they ſhall ſay within them-*

themſelves, this was he whom we had ſomtimes in deriſion and a proverb of reproach; we fools counted his life madneſs, and his end to be without honour. How is he number'd among the children of God, and his lot is among the Saints! Wherefore again, let him that is Holy be Holy ſtill. Let him but maintain his ſtation during his *ſhort warfare* here on earth, and he ſhall be hereafter confirm'd both in holineſs and happineſs, and be fix'd in that Center where he ſhall for ever reſt. For ſo ſays the Spirit to the Churches, *Him that overcometh will I make a Pillar in the Temple of my God, and he ſhall go no more out.* Rev. 3. 12.

A DIS-

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

HEROIC PIETY,

Wherein its Notion is ſtated and its Practice recommended.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

HEROIC PIETY.

1. SInce the Practice of Religion in general is not only the *Natural Inſtrument* of our *preſent* Happineſs, but alſo the *only* and *indiſpenſable condition* of our *Future*, one would think there were but little left for the Orator to do here, the naked efficacy of Self-love, and a ſerious conſideration of our true and main Intereſt, being ſufficient to engage us upon Religious performances. But he that ſhall undertake to recommend the Practice of *Heroic Piety*, has a much heavier task, not only becauſe he perſwades to *higher* degrees of Vertue, but becauſe he is to addreſs himſelf wholly to a *weaker* Principle. For ſince our *intereſt* is ſecured by the performance of *neceſſary* Duty, there remains nothing but a Principle of *Generoſity* to carry us on to the higher *advances*, the more glorious *Atchievements* in Religion. And what ſmall probability there is that it will often do ſo, may appear from the ill ſucceſs of the former and more prevailing Principle. For if

the greateſt intereſt imaginable can prevail with ſo very few to perform what is indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſecure it, ſure there is little hopes that *Generoſity*, which is a much *weaker* Principle, ſhould engage *many* upon *greater* performances.

2. But yet, notwithſtanding theſe diſcouragements, ſince our Bleſſed Saviour has taught us to pray, not only for the performance of God's will in *general*, but that it be *done on Earth as it is in Heaven*; that is, with the greateſt zeal, readineſs and alacrity, with all the degrees of *Seraphic* ardency that frail Mortality is capable of, I think a *Perſwaſive* to *Heroic Piety* may be a proper and uſeful undertaking; it being very reaſonable we ſhould make that the object of our *endeavours*, which our Saviour thought fit to make the matter of our *Prayers*.

3. In diſcourſing upon this ſubject, I ſhall proceed in this Method. 1. I ſhall ſtate the notion of *Heroic Piety*, and ſhew what I mean by it. 2. I ſhall demonſtrate that there is ſuch a thing. And 3. I ſhall offer ſome *Perſwaſives* to recommend the practice of it.

4. The Notion of *Heroic* Piety will be beſt underſtood by conſidering what the Moraliſts mean by *Heroic* Vertue. For the one carries the ſame proportion in *Religion* that the other does in *Morality*. But before I proceed to explain the *Thing*, I ſuppoſe it will not be amiſs to give ſome ſhort account of the *Name*. That it is derived

rived from the *Greek* word Ἥρως, is very obvious, all the difficulty is concerning the derivation of the *Greek* word it ſelf. And here I find the Grammarians are very much divided; ſome derive it ἀπὸ τ ἀρετῆς, but that ſeems ſomwhat hard; others derive it from ἀὴρ, becauſe 'twas ſuppoſed by the Ancients that the Souls of the *Heroes* had their abode in the Air, where they had a near proſpect of human affairs; and accordingly *Xenon* in *Laertius*, *lib.* 7. calls *Heroes* the Souls of wiſe men ſeparated from their Bodies, and ranging about in the Air; others derive it from Ἔρα, becauſe the Heroes are a kind of *terreſtrial* Gods, according to that definition which *Lucian* gives of an *Hero*, ὃς μήτε θεὸς μήτε ἄνθρωπος· ἀλλὰ συναμφότερον, one that is neither God nor man, but a compound of both. Others derive it from Ἥρα, the name of *Juno*, who was the Preſident Goddeſs of the Air, intimating thereby either the Habitation, or the light aereal Nature of the *Heroes*. And this Etymology I remember is approv'd of by St. *Auſtin*, *lib.* 10. *de Civ. Dei*, *cap.* 21. But methinks the moſt natural and ſignificant one is that of *Plato*, who derives it from Ἔρως, becauſe of that ardent and paſſionate Love which the *Heroes* are ſuppoſed to have for God. And as the word *Hero* is very doubtful as to its Etymology, ſo is it alſo various in its acceptation. Somtimes it is attributed to illuſtrious and eminent Perſonages while *living*, ſuch as act and live above the ordinary ſtrain of

Mortality, and render it a very disputable Point whether they are Gods or men. A Character which *Homer* gives of the great *Hector*, *Iliad* ω.

—Ὃς θεὸς ἔσχε μετ' ἀνδράσιν, οὐδὲ ἐῴκει
Ανδρός γε θνητοῦ παῖς ἔμμεναι, ἀλλὰ θεοῖο.

And in this sense the word *Hero* is used by *Hesiod*,

Ανδρῶν Ἡρώων θεῖον γένος, οἱ καλέονται
Ἡμίθεοι ———

Somtimes by Heroes are meant the Souls of wise and good men departed, as is evident from the fore-cited testimony in *Laertius*. But in the *Platonic* Philosophy by *Heroes* is understood a middle sort of Being, inferiour to those whom they stile the *Immortal Gods*, and superiour to Man; as is to be seen at large in *Hierocles*.

5. Beyond these three acceptations of the word, I do not know of any other. But this is certain, that in whatsoever sense it is used, it always denotes somthing great and extraordinary. So that from hence 'tis easie to collect what is meant by *Heroic Vertue*, *(viz.)* Such a vehement and intense pursuance of a mans last and best end, as engages him upon such excellent and highly commendable actions, which advance him much above the ordinary level of human Nature, and which he might wholly omit, and yet still maintain the Character of a good

good man. *Ariſtotle* in his *Ethics l. 7. c. 1.* calls it ἡ ὑπὲρ ἡμᾶς ἀρετὴ, that Vertue that is above us. By which, I ſuppoſe, he does not mean that it is above our reach and unattainable, but that it is above our obligation, and that when it is attain'd, it will elevate us above our ſelves.

6. In proportion to this Notion of Heroic Vertue, I underſtand by *Heroic Piety* thoſe excellent degrees and eminences of Religion, which, tho to arrive at be extremely laudable, yet we may fall ſhort of them without Sin, God having not bound them upon us as parts of *Duty*, or made them the *Conditions* of our Salvation, but only recommended them by way of *Counſel*, and left them as inſtances of *Generoſity*. Of this ſort are thoſe high and ſingular Exerciſes of Religion which are the fruits and effects of a profound and ſteady contemplation of God: Such as are the paſſionate applications of *Seraphic* Love, acts of ecſtatic joy and complaceney in the Perfections of the Divine Nature, holy tranſports of Zeal and Devotion, Praiſe and Adoration: earneſt contentions and very numerous returns of Prayer, actual references of our moſt natural and indifferent actions to Gods glory, extraordinary works of Charity, great ſeverities of Mortification and Self-denial, abſtemiouſneſs from many lawful Pleaſures, perpetual *Celebacy*, and whatſoever elſe are the excellent products of a *contemplative* and *affectionate* Religion.

7. Thus far of the Notion of *Heroic Piety*. I come now to my ſecond Undertaking, which was to ſhew that there is ſuch a thing. Tho univerſality and ſincerity of Obedience be indiſpenſably required of every Chriſtian, and conſequently every part of Religion obliges under the penalty of Damnation as to its *kind*, yet that there may be ſome *degrees* to the attainment of which we are not ſo obliged, will evidently appear from the proof of this one ſingle Propoſition, That every one is not bound to do what is *beſt*. The reaſonableneſs of which Propoſition appears from the very nature of the thing; for ſince that which is *Beſt* is a *Superlative*, it neceſſarily ſuppoſes the *Poſitive* to be *good*: And if ſo, then we are not bound to that which is *beſt*, for if we were, then that which is *only good* would be *evil*, (it being ſhort of what we are bound to) which is contrary to the ſuppoſition.

8. This Argument I take to be *Demonſtrative*, and therefore 'twould be a kind of *Supererogation* in me to alledge any more. But however, for the clearer eviction and ſtronger confirmation of this Aſſertion, I farther conſider, that the Scripture conſiſts of *Counſels* as well as *Commands*. Now if ſome things are matter of Counſel onely, 'tis obvious to conclude two things. 1. From their being *counſell'd*, that they are good (nothing being matter of Counſel but what is ſo)

Matt. 19. 20. and 21. 1 Cor. 7. 1, 6, 7, 25, 38. 2 Cor. 8. 10. and 9. 6.

and

and ſecondly, from their being *only* counſell'd, that they do not oblige, and conſequently, that there are ſome degrees of good that we are not obliged to.

9. It is farther obſervable, that in Scripture there is mention made of a threefold Will of God. *Rom.* 12. 2. τὸ θέλημα τὸ ἀγαθὸν, καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον, *That Will which is good, that which is well-pleaſing, and that which is perfect.* The firſt of theſe denotes abſolute *Duty*, the two laſt the various degrees of *Perfection* and *Heroic* Excellence. Thus for St. *Paul* to preach the Goſpel to the *Corinthians*, was an Act of ſtrict Duty which he could not leave undone without incurring that woe which he annexes to the omiſſion of it, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. τόδε ἀδαπάνως κηρύσσειν προαιρέσεως φιλοτιμία, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καύκημά ἐστι. *But to preach without charging them was an inſtance of Generoſity, and in that reſpect there was room for boaſting.* Thus again, for a *Jew* to allot the tenth part of his Revenue every third year toward the relief of the Poor, was an act of expreſs Duty, and in doing of that, he would but ſatisfie the obligation of the Law; But now if in his charitable contributions he ſhould exceed that proportion, according to the degrees of the exceſs, ſo would the degrees of his Perfection be. Thus again in the matter of *Devotion*, daily Prayer is generally concluded to be a *Duty*, and by ſome *Criticks* that it be *twice* perform'd, in proportion to the returns of the

Theophylact.

Jewiſh

Jewiſh Sacrifices, Morning and Evening: But now if a more generouſly diſpoſed Chriſtian ſhould add a *third* time, or out of *abundance* of zeal ſhould come up to the *Pſalmiſt's* reſolution of *(Seven times a day will I praiſe thee)* this would be a *free-will* Offering, *well pleaſing* and of *ſweet ſavour*, but not *commanded*.

10. From theſe and many other inſtances, which, if neceſſary, I could eaſily produce, it plainly appears that Religion does not conſiſt in an *indiviſible point*, but has a *Latitude*, and is capable of *more* and *leſs*, and conſequently there is room for *voluntary Oblations* and Acts of *Heroic Piety*.

11. I know it is uſually objected here, that what is ſuppoſed to be thus *Heroically* perform'd, is *incluſively* enjoyn'd by vertue of thoſe comprehenſive words, (*Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, &c.*) But, I conceive, that all which is intended by that phraſe, will amount to no more than, Firſt, a *ſincere* love of God, as 'tis oppoſed to that which is *partial* and *divided*; and ſecondly, ſuch a degree of loving him, as admits of nothing into *Competition* with him. And thus far reach the *Boundaries* of indiſpenſable Duty, it being impoſſible that he who does not love God in this *ſenſe* and *degree*, ſhould keep his Commandments. But beyond this, there are higher degrees, which, becauſe we may fall ſhort of without ſin, are the more excellent when attain'd.

So

So that in this Precept of loving God, as in all other inſtances of Religion, there is a great latitude, it being very poſſible for two Perſons to love God *ſincerely* and with their *whole Soul*, and yet in different meaſures (which is obſerv'd even among the Angels, the *Seraphins* having their name from their *exceſs* of *Love*) nay, for the ſame Perſon always to love God *ſincerely*. and yet at ſome times to exceed himſelf, and with his Saviour (who to be ſure never fail'd of *neceſſary* Duty) to *pray yet more earneſtly*.

12. There is another Objection yet behind, which I think my ſelf concern'd to anſwer, as well in my *own* defence as that of my *Argument*. Some perhaps may be ſo weak to imagine, that by aſſerting ſuch a thing as *Heroic Piety*, and that a Chriſtian may do *more* than he is commanded, I too much favour the Doctrine of *Supererogation*. But I conſider, that *for a Man to do more than he is commanded*, is an ambiguous expreſſion, and may denote either that he can perform the *whole* Law of God and *more*, or that, tho he fail of his Duty in many Inſtances, and conſequently with the reſt of Mankind, is *concluded under Sin*; Yet in ſome others he may exceed it, by *preſſing forward* to ſome degrees of excellency he is not obliged to. I do not aſſert the *former* of theſe, but the *latter*. And I think I have ſufficiently proved, that there are certain degrees in *Religion*, which we are not obliged to under Pain of Sin, and conſequently

ſequently that he who arrives ſo far, does (according to the *latter* notion of the *Phraſe*) do *more then he is commanded.*

13. Having in the foregoing *Periods* ſtated the Notion of *Heroic Piety*, and demonſtrated that there is ſuch a thing, I proceed now to my third and laſt undertaking, which was to offer ſome Perſwaſives to recommend the Practiſe of it, Firſt then, I conſider that Religion is the Perfection of a Man, the improvement and accompliſhment of that part of him wherein he reſembles his Maker, the purſuance of his beſt and laſt end, and conſequently his *Happineſs*. And will a man ſet *bounds* to his *Happineſs*? Will he be no more happy than he is *commanded*, no more than what will juſt ſerve to ſecure him from a *miſerable* Eternity? Is not Happineſs deſirable for it *ſelf*, as well as for the avoiding of *Miſery*? Why then do we deal with it as with *dangerous Phyſic*, weighing it by Grains and Scruples and nice Proportions? Why do we drink ſo *moderately* of the *River* of *Paradiſe*, ſo *ſparingly* of the *Well* of *Life*? Are we afraid of making too nigh advances to the State of Angels, of becoming *too* like God, of *antedating* Heaven? Are we affraid our Happineſs will flow in too *thick* upon us, that we ſhall not bear up againſt the Tide, but ſink under the too *powerful* enjoyment? Hereafter indeed, when we are bleſt with the *Beatific Viſion*, and the Glories of the Divine Brightneſs ſhall flaſh too *ſtrong* upon

our

our Souls, ſo that our Happineſs begins to be *leſſen'd* by its *greatneſs*; We may then with the Angels that attend the Throne, *veil* our Faces, and *divert* ſome of the too *exuberant* bleſſedneſs: But now in this *Region* we are far enough from being *under* the *Line*, there is no danger of ſuch *Extremity*, but rather the contrary, and therefore it would be now moſt adviſable for us to be as *Happy*, and to that end, as *Religious* as we can.

14. Secondly, I conſider, that ſince God, out of the abundance of his *overflowing* and *communicative* Goodneſs, was pleas'd to create and deſign man for the beſt of Ends, the fruition of himſelf in endleſs Happineſs, and ſince he has preſcribed no other Conditions for the attainment of this Happineſs; but that we would live happily here in this State of Probation, having made nothing our Duty but what would have been beſt for us to do whether he had commanded it or no, and has thereby declared, that he is ſo far only pleas'd with our Services to *him* as they are beneficial to *our ſelves*; this muſt needs be a moſt endearing engagement to one that has the leaſt ſpark of Generoſity or Ingenuity, to do ſomthing for the ſake of ſo *good* a God, beyond the Meaſures of Neceſſity, and the regards of his main and final Intereſt. This is the *only Tribute* of Gratitude we are capable of paying God for giving us ſuch good, ſuch reaſonable, and righteous Laws. Had the conditions

tions of our eternal welfare been never ſo hard, arbitrary, and contradictory to our preſent Happineſs, yet mere intereſt would engage us to perform *neceſſary Duty*, and ſhall we do no more out of a principle of *Love* to our excellent Lawgiver, for making our *preſent Happineſs* the *Condition* of our *future?* Shall the *Love* of *God* conſtrain us to do no more then what we would do *merely* for the *Love* of *our ſelves?* ſhall we ſtint our Performances to him, who ſets no Meaſures to his Love of us? Can our Generoſity be ever more ſeaſonably employ'd than in endeavouring to pleaſe him in *extraordinary* Meaſures, whoſe *Pleaſure* is to ſee us *happy* even *while* we *pleaſe* him? For ſo is the will of the wiſe and good Governour of the World, that in ſerving *him* we ſhould ſerve *our ſelves*, and like *Adam* in his dreſſing and cultivation of Paradiſe, at the ſame time diſcharge the Employment which God ſets us about, and conſult our *own* Convenience: So that it fares with us in our religious Exerciſes as with the Votary that ſacrifices at the Altar, who all the while he *pleaſes* and ſerves his *God*, *enjoys* the *perfumes* of his *own Incenſe*.

15. Thirdly, I conſider, that every man has a reſtleſs Principle of Love implanted in his Nature, a certain *Magnetiſm* of Paſſion, whereby (according to the *Platonic* and true notion of Love) he continually aſpires to ſomthing more excellent than himſelf, either really or apparent-

apparently, with a design and inclination to perfect his Being. This affection and disposition of Mind *all* Men have, and at *all* times. Our other Passions ebb and flow like the Tide, have their Seasons and Periods like *intermitting Fevers*. But this of Love is as constant as our *Radical* heat, as inseparable as *thought*, as even and equal as the Motions of Time. For no man does or can desire to be happy more at one time than at another, because he desires it always in the highest degree *possible*. 'Tis true, his Love, as to particular objects, may increase or decrease, according to the various apprehensions he has of their excellencies; but then, like *Motion* in the Universe, what it loses in one part it gains in another; so that in the whole it remains always alike, and the same. Now this *Amorous* Principle which every man receives with his Soul, and which is breath'd into him with the breath of Life, must necessarily have an object about which it may exercise it self, there being no such thing in *Love* (if in *Nature*) as an *Element* of *Self-sufficient* Fire. For tho we may easily and truly frame an abstract notion of Love or Desire in *general*, yet if we respect its *real* existence, we shall as soon find *First Matter* without *Form*, as *Love* without a particular *Object*. And, as 'tis necessary to the very being of Love that it have an object, so is it to our content and happiness, that it be a proportionate and satisfying one; for otherwise that passion which

which was intended as an inſtrument of *happineſs*, will prove an *affliction* and *torment* to us. Now there is but one ſuch object to be found, and that is God. In the application of our Paſſions to other things, the advice of the Poet is exceeding neceſſary,

Quicquid amas cupias non placuiſſe nimis.
Martial.

That we ſhould be very cautious how far we ſuffer our ſelves to be engaged in the love of any thing, becauſe there is nothing but *diſappointment* in the *enjoyment*, and *uncertainty* in the *poſſeſſion*. We muſt needs therefore be miſerable in our Love, unleſs God be the object of it. But neither is our happineſs ſufficiently ſecured by making *God* the object of our Love, unleſs we *concenter* our whole affections upon him, and (in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the Phraſe) *love him with all our Heart and with all our Soul*. For otherwiſe, whatever portion of our Love does not run in this Channel, muſt neceſſarily fix upon diſproportionate and unſatisfying objects, and conſequently be an inſtrument of diſcontent to us. 'Tis neceſſary therefore to the compleating of our happineſs, that that object ſhould *engroſs* all our affections to it ſelf, which only can ſatisfie them; and (according to the compariſon of an ingenious *Platoniſt*) that our minds ſhould have the ſame habitude

Marſilius Ficinus, Tom. 2. pag. 315.

tude to God that the Eye has to Light. Now the Eye does not only love Light above other things, but *delights* in nothing else. I confeſs, ſuch an *abſolute* and *entire Dedication* of our love to God as this, is not always practicable in this Life. It is the priviledg and happineſs of thoſe *confirm'd* Spirits who are ſo ſwallow'd up in the *Comprehenſions* of *Eternity*, and ſo perpetually raviſh'd with the Glories of the Divine Beauty, that they have not the *power* to turn aſide to any *other* object. But tho this Superlative Excellency of Divine Love be not attainable on this ſide of the *thick darkneſs*, it being the proper effect of *open Viſion*, and not of *Contemplation*; yet however, by the help of this latter, we may arrive to many degrees of it, and the more entire and undivided our love is to God, the fewer diſappointments and diſſatisfactions we ſhall meet with in the World, which is a very ſtrong engagement to *Heroic Piety*.

16. Fourthly, I conſider, that the degrees of our *Reward* ſhall be proportionable to the degrees of our *Piety*: We ſhall reap as plentifully as we ſow, and at the great day of Retribution, we ſhall find, that beſides the general *Collation* of Happineſs, peculiar Coronets of Glory are prepared for *Eminent* Saints. Indeed, all hearty and ſincere lovers of God and Religion ſhall partake of the *glories* of the *Kingdom*; but ſome ſhall ſit nearer the Throne than others, and enjoy a more *intimate* perception of the *Divine*

Beauty. All the true *Followers* of Jesus shall indeed *feast* with him at the *great Supper*, but some shall be placed nearer to him than others; and still there shall be a *Beloved Disciple* that shall *lean* on his *Bosom*. I know this Doctrine concerning different degrees of Glory, is (and indeed what is there that is not) very much question'd by some, and peremptorily deny'd by others; but since it is so highly agreeable to the goodness and bounty of God, and to the *Catholic* Measures of Sense and Reason; and is so mightily favour'd, if not expressly asserted in many places of Scripture, I shall not here go about to establish the truth of it, but taking it for granted, do urge this as another consideration of great moment, toward encouraging the practice of *Heroic Piety*.

17. Fifthly, and lastly, I consider, that We have indeed but very little time to serve God in. The Life of man at longest is but short, and considering how small a part of it we *live*, much *shorter*. If we *deduct* from the *Computation* of our Years (as we must do, if we will take a true estimate of our Life) that part of our time which is spent in the incogitancy of Infancy and Childhood, the impertinence and heedlessness of Youth, in the necessities of Nature, Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, and other Refreshments; in business and worldly Concerns, engagements with Friends and Relations, in the offices of Civility and mutual intercourse; besides a thou-

sand

ſand other unneceſſary avocations; we ſhall find that there is but a ſmall portion left even for the Retirements of Study, for our improvement in Arts and Sciences, and other intellectual accompliſhments. But then if we conſider what great *diſburſements* of our time are made upon *them* alſo, we ſhall find that Religion is *crowded* up into a very *narrow compaſs*; ſo narrow, that were not the rewards of Heaven matter of *expreſs Revelation*, 'twould be the greateſt *Preſumption* imaginable to hope for them upon the condition of ſuch *inconſiderable* Services. Since then our time of ſerving God is ſo very ſhort, ſo infinitely diſproportionate to the rewards we expect from him, 'tis but a reaſonable piece of ingenuity to work *with all our might*, and do as much in it as we can: to ſupply the *poverty* of Time by *frugal* management and *intenſeneſs* of affection, to ſerve God *earneſtly*, *vigorouſly*, and *zealouſly*; and in one days Devotion to *abbreviate* the *ordinary* Piety of *many years*. 'Tis ſaid of the Devil, that he proſecuted his malicious deſigns againſt the Church with greater earneſtneſs and vigour, becauſe *he knew he had but a ſhort time*. Rev. 12. 12. And ſhall not the ſame conſideration prevail with a *generous* Soul to do as much for God and Religion, as the Devil did *againſt* them? 'Tis a ſhame for him that has but a *ſhort* part to act upon the *Stage*, not to perform it *well*, eſpecially when he is to act it but *once*. Man has but one *ſtate of Probation*,

and that of an exceeding short continuance, and therefore, since he cannot serve God *long*, he should serve him *much*, employ every minute of his life to the best advantage, *thicken* his Devotions, *hallow* every *day* in his *Kalendar* by Religious exercises, and every *action* in his *Life* by holy *references* and *designments*; for let him make what haste he can to be *wise*, Time will *out-run* him. This is a Consideration of infinite moment to him that duly weighs it; and he that *thus numbers his days*, will find great reason to *apply his heart to* more than *ordinary* degrees of *Wisdom*.

CONTEMPLATION

AND

LOVE.

OR,

The Methodical Aſcent of the Soul to God, by ſteps of Meditation.

----- Niſi ad hæc admitterer,
Non fuerat operæ pretium naſci.
Senec. Nat. Quæſt. l. 1.

Contemplation the Firſt.

That 'tis neceſſary Man ſhould have ſome end.

1. IN the Depth of Solitude and Silence, having withdrawn my ſelf not only from all worldly Commerce, but from all thoughts concerning any thing without my own Sphere; I retire wholly into my ſelf, and there ſpeculate the Compoſition of my *Intellectual* nature.

2. And here beſides that faculty of *Perception* whereby I apprehend objects, whether Material or Immaterial, without any Material ſpecies; (which in the *Carteſian* Dialect I call *Pure Intellect*) and that other of apprehending objects as preſent, under a corporeal image or repreſentation; (which I diſtinguiſh from the other power of Perception by the name of *Imagination*) I ſay, beſides theſe two, I obſerve an *Appetitive* Faculty, whereby I incline to Apparent good; and that either by a *bare* act of *Propenſion*, or endeavour to unite with the agreeable object; which anſwers to Pure Intellect, and may be call'd *Will* or rather *Volition*) or by ſuch a propenſion of the Soul as is alſo accompany'd with a Commotion of the Blood and Spirits; which anſwers to Imagination, and is the ſame with the *Paſſion* of *Love*.

3. And of this I further meditate, and by self-reflexion experiment, that altho the *Perceptive* Faculty be not always in actual exercise, or at least not in the same degree of it. (For, if according to the *Cartesian* Hypothesis there be no intermission of Cogitation, yet 'tis most certain that its applications are not always equal and uniform) tho this I say be true as to the *Perceptive*; yet, I find by attending to the operations of my nature, that the *Appetitive* faculty is not only always in Act, but in the same degree of intension and Application. As it never has any total intermission, so neither is it subject (as indeed every thing else in man is) to *ebbs* and *flows*, but acts *uniformly* as well as *constantly*. This Amorous *Bias's* and Endeavour of the Soul is like that stock of Motion which the *French* Philosopher supposes the Universe at first endow'd with, which continues always at the same rate, not to be abated or increas'd. Not that this equality of Love is to be understood in reference to *particular* objects, any more than that of Motion in reference to particular Bodyes; but only, that it gains in one part, as much as it loses in another, so as in the *whole* to remain equal and uniform.

4. For however various and inconstant I may be in my love of particular objects, according to the various apprehension I have of their respective excellencyes; yet certainly I pursue *Happiness* in *general* with the same earnestness and

and vigour, and do not love or *wish well* to my ſelf more at one time, than at another.

5. And indeed ſince all my inconſtancy in the proſecution of particular objects proceeds from the variety of my Apprehenſions concerning their Excellency; and the only reaſon why I withdraw my Affection from this or that thing is, becauſe I diſcern or ſuſpect that Happineſs not to be there which I expected, it is hence plainly argued *à poſteriori*, that I ſtand at all times equally affected towards Happineſs it ſelf. As he that is therefore only varioully affected toward the means according as he varioully apprehends their ſerviceableneſs to the End, may be truly ſaid to affect the End it ſelf always alike.

6. Nor can it poſſibly be otherwiſe than that I ſhould thus point at Happineſs with an equal *Verticity*; becauſe I always affect it in the higheſt degree that is poſſible, which admits of no *Latitude*. For I conſider my ſelf here as a *neceſſary Agent*; and accordingly as ſuch can neither ſuſpend the whole Act, nor any one degree of it, but muſt needs operate to the utmoſt ſtretch of my Power. This *Spring* of my Soul (my Appetitive Faculty) is always at its *full bent*, and accordingly preſſes and endeavours with its whole *Elaſticity*.

7. For ſince Good or Happineſs is the *utmoſt* object of my *Appetitive*, it muſt needs employ its *whole* Power, otherwiſe ſo much of it as is not

not in act will be for ever uncapable of being ſo; (there being nothing left beyond that to bring it into act) and conſequently will be planted in me in vain, which I think abſurd to admit; and therefore find it neceſſary to conclude that my Appetitive is wholly employ'd in the love of Happineſs; or that I always love it to the utmoſt capacity of my faculty.

8. Since therefore I find in my ſelf an Appetitive Faculty which is always in actual exerciſe, and that after an even and equal meaſure; and not only ſo, but alſo in the very Height of activity and *Invigoration*; I am by the clue of Meditation further led to conclude, that there muſt be ſome *Center* for this *Weight*; ſome object or other, either within or without me, of ſuch ample, copious and ſolid excellence as may anſwer to the full extent of my deſires, bear the whole *ſtreſs* of my inclining Soul, and ſuch as may well deſerve to be call'd the *End* of *man*.

9. For I cannot think it any way conſiſtent with the goodneſs of that great Being which call'd me out of the womb of Nothing to what I am, to plant in me ſuch an *Amorous* Principle which at no time lies *Dormant*, but is always *equally* awake, and acting with the utmoſt plenitude of its vigour, ſuppoſing there were no proportionable object in the whole *Latitude* of *Entity* for it to fix and bottom upon. It being only a greater preparation and qualification for miſery to have inlarged Faculties and Appetites

petites when there is nothing to afford them agreeable ſatisfaction. Which however ſome may be juſtly ſubjected to for their *after-demerit*, can yet never be reaſonably ſuppos'd to be the *Antecedent* will of God.

10. And this I am further induced to believe, when I conſider how the great Author of Nature has made proviſion for the entertainment of our animal Faculties and particular Appetites: All our ſenſes, Seeing, Hearing, Taſting, Smelling and Touching, have their proper objects and opportunities of pleaſure reſpectively. Which makes it very unlikely that our *great* and *general* Appetite of being *Happy*, ſhould be the only one that is *diſinherited* and unprovided for. Eſpecially conſidering that the enjoyment and indulgence of any of the reſt is then only and in ſuch inſtances and circumſtances reſtrain'd, when the greater intereſts of Happineſs are thereby croſs'd and defeated. Which argues, that the true Happineſs of Man is the thing chiefly regarded by God; and conſequently, that there is a Proviſion for that *great* Appetite of his of being *Happy*, as well as for any of the *reſt*.

11. Which is yet further confirm'd to me, when I conſider, that there is an *exemplification* of it in the *material* part of the univerſe. The moſt ponderous Body that is has its Center towards which it always preſſes, and in which it ſettles with full acquieſcence. Now ſince there

is

is ſomthing in Spiritual Beings which corre-ſponds to *weight* in Bodies, (according to that of St. *Auſtin*, *Amor tuus eſt Pondus tuum*) the Analogy of the thing perſwades me to think that there is alſo ſomthing which ſhall be to them in the nature of a *Center*.

12. And as the contrary is inconſiſtent with the Divine *goodneſs*, ſo neither can I reconcile it to the *Wiſdom* of him who made all things in *Number*, *Weight* and *Meaſure*, to be ſo much out in his *Proportions* as to create an Appetite too high, vigorous, and craving, for the excellency and fullneſs of any object. This would be like making a Body too heavy for the *Central* Poiſe; or as if the *Spring* of a Watch ſhould be made too ſtrong for the *wheel*, or any other ſuch diſproportionate operations: which neither comports with the *Geometry* of the Divine *Mind*, nor with the exact Harmony of his *other works*.

13. The *Concluſion* therefore from theſe *Premiſes* is, that Man is not as a Body for ever, rolling on in an Infinite vacuity; or as a Needle continually *trembling* for an *embrace*: but that he has his proper *end* and *Center*; to which 'tis poſſible for him to arrive, and in which as impoſſible for him when once arrived, not fully to Acquieſce.

The

The Prayer.

MY *God*, My *Creator*, who by that active Principle of Love and immenſe Deſire thou haſt interwoven with my Nature, haſt given me fair grounds to conclude that there muſt be ſome End on which I may fix and Center with the full ſtreſs of my Faculties; point out to me by the guidance of thy Spirit this my true End, direct me in the perſuance, and bring me to the attainment of it. Let me neither *miſtake* my true Center, nor by any irregular or *oblique* motion *decline* from it. But as thou haſt appointed me for Happineſs, and furniſh'd me with natural Capacitys of receiving it, ſo let it be thy good pleaſure to poſſeſs my Soul with ſuch a ſerious and diligent Concern for my great intereſt, that I may not by any default of mine fail of that excellent good which will fill all the emptineſſes of my Soul, leave no deſire unſatisfy'd, and no trouble I can undergo in the queſt of it unrewarded. O ſuffer me not to be diſappointed of that excellent, that only good: but as thou haſt made me aſpire towards it infinitely, ſo grant I may enjoy it eternally, for thy great love and goodneſs ſake, *Amen.*

Con-

Contemplation the Second.

That 'tis impoſſible Man ſhould be his own end.

1. BEing from my *yeſterdays* Contemplation of my Intellectual Nature, and the ſtock of deſires therein implanted, led to this *Concluſion*, that 'tis neceſſary man ſhould have ſome end; I now conſider that 'tis but to carry on the thred of the ſame Contemplation a little further, and 'twill as evidently appear, that 'tis impoſſible man ſhould be his own end.

2. For while I ſtand fix'd in the Contemplation of my ſelf, I obſerve that I have this *Appetitive* Principle, not only in ſuch a manner as anſwers to *Weight* in Bodies, but alſo ſo as to be analogous to *gravitation*, that is, to Weight not only *in actu primo*, but *in actu ſecundo*, as it denotes ſuch an inclination of Body whereby not only one part preſſes againſt another, but whereby the whole leans and endeavours to ſomthing beyond the bounds of its own *circumference*.

3. For beſides Acts of *ſelf-complacency*, whereby I delight and pleaſe my ſelf in the perfections of my Nature, and turn as it were upon my own *Axis*; I find in me a great deal of *Extatical* Love, which continually carryes me out

to

to good without my ſelf; which I endeavour to cloſe and unite with, in hopes of bettering my preſent ſtate, and of ſupplying from *without* what I ſeek, but cannot find *within*.

4. Hence therefore I conclude that I am not (whatever complacencies I may ſomtimes take in my ſelf) a *Central* or *ſelf-terminative* Being, it being as impoſſible that what is ſo ſhould love any thing *without*, (as love is taken for *Deſire* or Aſpiring to good) as that a Body ſhould gravitate in the *Center*. That which loves any thing *without*, wants ſomthing *within*. If therefore I *gravitate* I am off from the *Center*, conſequently not my *own* Center.

5. And that I cannot ever Center in my ſelf and be my own End, is yet further evidenc'd to me, when I contemplate the great *Diſproportion* between my *Appetitive* and all my *other Perfections* whether of Body or of Mind. I deſire both more *kinds* of pleaſure than they all can afford, and more *Degrees* of pleaſure in the ſame kind. Which muſt neceſſarily be, becauſe my Deſires are extended to *all poſſible* good, but my reall endowments and perfections are infinitely ſhort of that extent. And by conſequence, my Deſires cannot be *cramp'd* within the narrow bounds of my own Sphere, but will of neceſſity run out farther, even as far as there is good without it.

6. And as there is a manifeſt diſproportion between my ſtock of *ſelf-perfection* and my *Appetitive*,

petitive, as to its *objective* Latitude (*viz.*) the *kinds* and *degrees* of Happineſs; ſo is there no leſs as to the *intenſeneſs* of its Acts. This Appetitive of mine (as was remark'd in the preceding Contemplation) is always in an *equal* invigoration, and burns with an even and uniform heat; but I have not within my ſelf *fuel* enough to maintain this flame in an equal height. I always equally *deſire*, but I am not always equally *deſirable*: partly becauſe I am ſomtimes (even in my own partial judgment) in a Condition of leſs excellence both as to my Morals and Intellectuals than at other times; and partly, becauſe the ſtock of my Perfections tho 'twere poſſible they could be always alike as my *Deſires* are, yet being both *Finite* in Nature, and *Few* in Number, cannot bear a long and uninterrupted enjoyment, and appear ſtill equally grateful under it, any more than a ſhort Poem tho in it *ſelf equally* excellent, can *pleaſe* equally after a Million of Repetitions.

7. Hence it comes to paſs, that I do not always take an equal Complacency in my ſelf, but am oftentimes (eſpecially after long retirements) apt to be melancholy and to grow weary of my own company, ſo that I am fain to lay aſide my ſelf (as it were) for a while, and relieve the *penury* of Solitude with the variety of Company, and ſo *whet* my appetite toward my ſelf as I do toward my meat, by *Faſting* and *abſtemiouſneſs*.

8. Since

2. Since therefore I always desire equally, but not my *self*; (being not upon the two accounts before mention'd always equally desirable) it follows, that the steddiness and evenness of this my Flame must depend upon some *other* Fuel, good which is *without* me. And consequently, I do not terminate in my self, and so am not my own End.

The Prayer.

MY *God*, my *Creator*, who hast in thy great wisdom furnish'd me with Desires too large and vehement for the other Perfections of my Nature, and hast thereby made it impossible that I should ever be my own End; grant me effectually to consider the Barrenness and insufficiency of my own Nature, and how unable I am upon my own solitary stock to satisfy the importunity of my Soul: that so I may not be transported with vain complacencies, nor endeavour to bottom my self upon such a Center as will moulder away under me and deceive me. Let me ever weigh my self in a true Ballance, and be as observant of my imperfections as of my excellencies. Let me be ever *thankfull* for the one, and *humble* for the other. What ever else I am ignorant of, O grant me

a true understanding of my self; that I may not to the *vanity* of my Nature add *levity* of Spirit, nor become despicable in *thy* eyes by being too pretious in my *own*. *Amen, Amen.*

Contemplation the Third.

That 'tis impossible that any other Created good should be the end of man.

1. HAving by the light of Contemplation discover'd the necessity of man's having some end, and the utter impossibility of his ever being his own End; I am now concern'd to look beyond the Orb of my own Perfections, and to consider, whether the whole Latitude of the *Creation* can afford any good that will terminate the *Amorous* Bent of my Soul, and wherein I may sweetly and securely rest as in my *end* or *Center*.

2. And this I am the more induced to enquire into, first, because I observe that the generality of men and those some of the most sagacious, thinking, and inquisitive, do persue many interests in this visible and sublunary world (which yet is the most cheap and inconsiderable part of the Creation) with as much fervency, vigour and assiduity, as they could possibly do were it the true End of man. So that one

one would think by the *quickneſs* of their *motion* they were nigh the *Center*.

3. Secondly, becauſe I obſerve concerning my ſelf, that there are ſome *few* things in the world which I love with great paſſion, and delight in with ſomthing like *ſatisfaction* and *acquieſcence*. Such as are Converſation with ſelect Friends, or men of harmonical and *tunable* diſpoſitions; reading of cloſe and fine-wrought Diſcourſes, ſolitary walks and Gardens, the magnificence of the Heavens, the Beauty of the Spring; and above all, majeſtic and well compoſed Muſic. Which laſt, could I enjoy it in its higheſt perfection and without interruption, would, I am apt to fancy, terminate my deſires and make me happy; at leaſt I am well aſſured I ſhould *pity* more than I ſhould *envy*.

4. Thirdly, becauſe I conſider that the great Author of Nature is brought in by *Moſes* commending upon a *deliberate review* all the works of his hands. That which before the divine Incubation was תהו ובהו *Solitude and inanity*, after the Spirit had moved upon the waters he pronounc'd טוב מאד *Superlatively good*. So very Superlatively good, that even the glory of *Solomon*, in the judgment of him who was both greater and wiſer than he, was not comparable to one of Nature's meaneſt flowers. And if the Beauty and variety of the Creature was ſo conſiderable as to merit approbation from him that made it, what is there of *our* Love and Com-

placency that it may not challenge? That which can but *please* God, may well be supposed able to *satisfy* man: That wherein the Creator *delights*, the Creature one would think might fully *rest* and *acquiesce* in.

5. By such considerations as these when solely attended to, I have been sometimes almost prevail'd upon to think that there is good enough in the Creation of God, if amass'd together and fully enjoy'd, to employ the whole activity of my Love, and fix the entire weight of my Soul. But yet when I consider *experience*, and compare the Aspirations of my Nature with the goodness of the Creation, I am driven to conclude, that altho the Creatures of God (whatever the *Manichees* say to the contrary) are all good enough to afford matter for *entertainment* and *praise*, yet they cannot *detain* and give *Anchorage* to the Soul of man. The motion of the Appetite may be somwhat *resisted* by created good, and its force a little *broken*, but it will soon sink through, like a stone through a watery medium. Some repast may be found in the Creature; but as for complete satisfaction and termination of desires *the Sea saith it is not in me, and the Depth saith it is not in me*. All that God ever *did* or ever *can* make will prove insufficient for this purpose, and come under that dectetory Sentence of the wise Preacher, *Vanity of Vanitys, all is Vanity*.

6. And

6. And this is first confirm'd to me from *experience*, and that not my *own* only, but of all *mankind*. For as the weight of my affections (as was observ'd in yesterdays Contemplation) is *extatical* and inclines to good without my self; so does it press beyond that which is *created* too; and consequently argues, that the Creation without me can no more be my Center, than I can be to my self.

7. For not to insist upon the great Emptiness of *Fruition*, that every flower in this Paradise of God *shrinks* assoon as *touch'd*; that whatever *Reversions* and *Prospects* of happiness we may have, 'tis yet seldom known that any man pronounces himself tolerably happy in the *present*; that men are not pleas'd with that themselves, for which they envy another: not to insist, I say, on these and the like, did ever any man, tho never so fortunate in his designs and never so well pleas'd in his attainments, find himself able to confine his desires within the sphere of that good he was possess'd of? 'Tis true indeed, he may desire no more of the *same*, he may have so much of *Riches* as to desire no more *Riches*, so much of *Honour* as to desire no more *Honour*; but he cannot have so much of *any* thing as not simply to *desire* on further. That is in short, he may be *satiated*, but not *satisfy'd*.

8. And this we have confirm'd by the ingenuous confession of one, who *dug* as *low* for this *Treasure* as ever man did or could, that ran-

ſack'd the whole Creation, and ſeem'd to make it his profeſs'd buſineſs to extract if poſſible this *divine Elixir*, not as a *Voluptuary* but as a *Philoſopher*, for *Experiment* and *Curioſity* more than for *ſenſuality* and *pleaſure*. But what was the iſſue? Why, after the chargeable *Operation* the deluded *Chymiſt* ſits down, recounts his gains, and finds this to be the ſum of them, that his *judgment* indeed was *inform'd*, but not that his *deſires* were *ſatisfy'd*; that he had with all his coſt bought only this piece of wiſdom, to know the vanity of the Creation ſo far as to give o're all further ſearch, and loſe no more time, coſt and labour in a *fruitleſs experiment*.

9. And that what this great Enquirer after Happineſs experimented is every mans caſe, I am further aſſured, when I contemplate that the greateſt Favorites of Fortune, thoſe who have had the world at command, and could enjoy all that is good in it with almoſt as little trouble as 'twas created, at a *words ſpeaking*, have yet all along been ſubject to melancholy, eſpecially after ſome notable enjoyment, as the *Grecian Hero* wept when he had conquer'd the world. Now what ſhould the cauſe of this be, but that they find themſelves empty in the midſt of their fullneſs; that they *Deſire* further than they *enjoy*; that however every ſenſe about them be feaſted to the Height, yet their remains a *general* Appetite, that of being *Happy*, which is not ſatisfy'd; and not only ſo, but becauſe they

ſuſpect

ſuſpect withall (as indeed they have very good reaſon, having taſted the *utmoſt* of Natures entertainment) that it *never ſhall* be. And from this *Deſire* and *Deſpair* proceeds their melancholy and dejection of Spirit. And to this purpoſe I call to mind a very remarkable ſtory recorded by *Euſebius Nierembergius*, in his book *De Arte Voluntatis*, concerning an Eaſtern Emperour, who was minded to try the ſame experiment upon his ſon as *Solomon* did upon himſelf, and to ſee how far the accommodations of Life might go towards true Felicity. He accordingly train'd him up from his infancy in magnificent Apartments, ſtudiouſly remov'd from him all pitiable objects that he might not have ſo much as a *Notion* of miſery, humour'd him in every Punctilio, and furniſh'd him with whatſoever he either did wiſh for, or might be ſuppos'd to take pleaſure in; till at length the *unfortunately* Happy young man obſerving himſelf to be ſtill in *Deſires*, and that in a ſtate of all poſſible worldly affluence, could no longer flatter himſelf with *imaginary* Proſpects, but concluded that no condition would ever mend the matter, and ſo fell into extreme Melancholy and Deſpair. lib. 6. p. 537.

10. Now I conſider, that if *mean* Perſons only were ſubject to Melancholy, the *Deſire* from whence it proceeded might be accounted for another way; namely, from their not having ſo *much* of *created* good as if *poſſeſs'd* might be

thought ſufficient to ſatisfy. But when men that ſit on the top of Fortune's wheel, and drink at the *head fountains* of Nature, are yet liable to melancholy dejections, 'tis to me a plain argument that the cauſe of this melancholy, their *Deſires*, proceeds from a *Deficiency* in the *things themſelves*; not that they are ſtraitned in their *poſſeſſions*, but that the *things* which they poſſeſs are *weigh'd in the Ballance and found wanting*.

11. Thus far is this Truth atteſted to by *Experience*. But I am yet further aſſured of it when I compare the Aſpirations of my Nature with the goodneſs of the Creation; for when I do ſo, I find they are very *diſproportionate*. 'Twas a Celebrated Problem among the ancient Mythologiſts, what was the *ſtrongeſt* thing, what the *wiſeſt*, and what the *greateſt*? Concerning which 'twas thus determin'd, that the *ſtrongeſt* thing was *Neceſſity*, the *wiſeſt* was *Time*, and the *greateſt* was the *Heart* of Man. And well may that be call'd the greateſt thing whoſe capacity can take in the whole Creation, and yet like the *immenſe ſpace*, remain ſtill an *unrepleniſh'd* Emptineſs.

12. For my Deſires are circumſcribed with no limits, but run on indefinitely to all poſſible good. But now the *good* of the *Creation*, like the Creation it ſelf, is *bounded*, the very notion of a *Creature* involving *imperfection*, as much as *Body* does *Circumſcription* and termination. Hence therefore I conclude, that not only all the

the good of the Creation tho collected together into *Extract* and *Spirit* by the *Chymistry* of its great Author, would be insufficient to afford me perfect Satisfaction; but that 'tis not in the *Power* of him that is *Omnipotent* to Create any good that can satisfy my Desires, any more than to create a Body that shall fill Immense space. And consequently, that 'tis impossible that any created good should be the end of man.

The Prayer.

MY *God*, My *Creator*, who hast made all things for the present *Entertainment*, but nothing for the *End* of Man; grant I may ever justly discern between the *goodness* and the *vanity* of thy Creatures, that I may not either by not heeding to the former become *unthankful*, or by not heeding to the latter, become *Idolatrous*. O keep this Conviction still *awake* in me how insufficient all created good is towards true Felicity; that I may not any longer with the mistaken Votaries of thy Son's Sepulcher, seek the *Living* among the *Dead*, Light in the Regions of Darkness; and that I may no longer *labour for that which is not bread*. Let me not add care, labour and toil to the misery of unquench'd Thirst and unsatisfy'd Desires: but

but ſince I am certain never to find *Reſt* in the *boſom* of thy Creation, grant I may be ſo wiſe at leaſt, as not to weary my ſelf more in the fruitleſs perſuit of it. Withdraw, I beſeech thee, my expectations of Happineſs from all the works of thy hands: and fix them there only, where there is no diſappointment or deluſion, even in the true Center of all Deſire: for the ſake of thy tender compaſſions, *Amen.*

Con-

Contemplation the Fourth.

That God who is the Author of man, is likewiſe his true End and Center.

1. WHen I Contemplate the Nature of man, and conſider how the Deſire of Happineſs is interwoven with it; that *Love is ſtrong as Death and impertunate as the Grave;* that there is a vehement and conſtant *Verticity* in the Soul towards perfect good, which begins aſſoon, and is as immortal as her ſelf; and withall, how diſproportionately this *Amorous diſpoſition* of the Soul is gratify'd by any entertainment whether domeſtic or forreign ſhe can meet with in the Circle of *created* good: I find it neceſſary to conclude, that the great Being who commanded me to exiſt, is ſo every way perfect and all-ſufficient as to anſwer that vaſt ſtock of deſires our Natures come fraught withall into the world; ſince otherwiſe (which is abſurd to ſuppoſe) of all the Creatures in it Man would be the moſt miſerable.

2. For what man of *thoughts* is there, who after a thorough Conviction that he can neither get *rid* of his deſires, nor among the Proviſions of Nature have them fully *gratify'd*, would not imme-

immediatly throw up his Title to Immortality, if he thought himself arriv'd to the *Meridian* of his Happiness, and that he must never expect to be in a better Condition than he is? For to have enlarg'd desires and nothing to satisfy them, is such a *contrivance* for misery, that 'tis thought by some to be the *Portion* of Hell, and to make up the very *Formality* of Damnation.

3. But to our great Consolation 'tis wholly in our own power whether it shall be *always* so with us, or no. There is a Being whose *perfections* are answerable to our *Desires*. He that made us can satisfy every Appetite he has planted in us, and he that is Happy in *reflecting* upon himself can make us so too, by the *direct* view of his Glory. He can entertain all our facultys; our *understandings* as he is *Truth*, and our *wills* as he is *goodness*; and that in the *Highest* degree, because he is infinite in *both*. He can more than employ all our Powers in their utmost *Elevation*, for he is every way Perfect and all-sufficient, *yea he is altogether Lovely*.

4. But to evince more particularly and distinctly that God is the true End of man, I shall consider, whether the conditions requisite to his being so are found in him. Now these can be no other than these two in general, 1st, that he be absolutely good and perfect in himself, so as to be *able* to fill and satisfy the whole capacity of our Desires; and 2ly, that he be *willing* that man shall partake of this his Transcendent

ſcendent Fullneſs, ſo as actually one time or other to fix the weight of his Appetite and become his Center. If therefore theſe two conditions are found in God, he has all that is requiſite to make him our End. And that they are, is now to be made appear.

5. Firſt then, that God is abſolutely good and perfect in himſelf, ſo as to be able to fill and ſatisfy the whole capacity of our deſires. There are ſeveral Topics in the *Metaphyſics* from whence I might infer this, but I ſhall confine my preſent ſpeculation to this one, that God is the *Firſt Being*. This is a very reaſonable Poſtulatum; it being too obvious to need any proof, that there is a Firſt Being, or, that by the Firſt Being is meant God. It remains therefore, that we try what advantage may be made of it.

6. When therefore I conſider God as the *Firſt Being*, I am from thence in the firſt place led to conclude, that he has *eminently* and in a moſt excellent manner in himſelf all kinds and degrees of perfection, that exiſt looſely and ſeperately in all ſecond Beings. And that, not only becauſe the Effect cannot poſſibly exceed the vertue of the cauſe, any more than it can proceed from no cauſe: (which is the ground *Carteſius* builds upon, when he proves the exiſtence of God from the *objective* reality of his Idea) but becauſe I further obſerve that in the *Scale* of Being all *aſcenſion* is by *addition*, and, that

that what is disper's'd in the Inferiour, is collected, and that after a more excellent manner, in the Superiour. Thus in Vegetables there is bare life, in Sensitives Vegetative life and sense, in Rationals Vegetative life sense and reason: and all this either formally or eminently with Intelligence in Angels. And since there is such an Harmonical *Subordination* among second Beings, so that the Superiour contains all the perfection of the Inferiour, with a peculiar excellence of its own superadded; I think I have fair grounds to conclude, that the absolutely First Being has in his rich Essence all the scatter'd excellencies of the subordinate ones in a more perfect manner than they *themselves* have, with some peculiar excellence of his own besides.

Now tho a Being thus *accumulatively* perfect and excellent, would be beyond all Conception, great and glorious, and would employ an Eternity in *Contemplation* and *Love*; we have yet seen but an *Arme* of this *Sea* of *Beauty*, and been enlightned only with the *Back-parts* of his Glory. For if God be the First *Being*, as is here supposed, I may further conclude that he is also the First *Good*: (*Good* and *Being* being convertible, and every thing having so much Good in it as it has of Entity and no more) and if he be the First Good, I cannot see how this Conclusion can be avoided, that he is *Infinitely Good*.

3. For

8. For I consider, that the First Good can have no *Cause* of that Goodness which it has: otherwise, it being necessary that the *Cause* of Good should be *Good*, it would not be the *First*. And if the First Good can have no cause of its Goodness, it can likewise have no cause of the *Termination* of it, since what has no cause *absolutely* and *simply*, cannot have a cause in any particular *respect*; and if it has no cause of its Termination it must necessarily be *interminate* or infinite, and Consequently God, who is the *First* Good, is *infinitely* Good.

9. And now breath a while my Soul; and consider what a rich *Mine* of Good thou hast *Sprung*. Thou hast found out a Being, who is not only the *Ideal* as well as *Efficient* cause of all created excellence; but who is *Infinitely* Good and excellent. This is he whose great Perfection not only contains and infinitely exceeds, but *Eclipses* and quite *Extinguishes* all the Beauty of the Creature; so that (as the express Image of this great Excellence informs us) *there* is *none Good, but one, which is God.* This is he whose Good is incomprehensible by the understanding, and inexhaustible by the will and affections of man. This is the celebrated Αὐταρκείαν of *Aristotle*, the ἰδία τῦ Ἀγαθῦ of *Plato*, and the *El Shaddai* of the *Hebrews*. This is the great πανπλήρωμα the universal Plenitude, whose Happiness is consummated within his own Circle; who *supports* himself upon the *Basis* of his own

All-

All-Sufficiency, and is his own End and Center.

10. And now what is there more requisite to qualify him for being *mine* also but this only, that he be willing that man shall partake of this his transcendent fullness, so as actually one time or other to fix the *Weight* of his Appetite; which was the second Condition.

11. And that this is also found in God, I think I have sufficient assurance from these two things; the Absolute Perfection of his Nature; and those express Revelations he has made of his Will, as to this particular. As for the Nature of God, it involves, as in *Notion* and Conception, so likewise in *Truth* and reality, (as was above demonstrated) absolute and infinite Perfection; and consequently, includes a *Beneficent* and *Communicative* disposition; this being a *Perfection*.

12. Nor does the Superlative eminency of the Divine nature only argue him to be *Communicative*, but to be the *Most* Communicative and Selfdiffusive of all Beings. For, as all *Kinds*, so all *degrees* of excellency must of necessity be included in a Being absolutely and infinitely perfect, such as God is. Whence it will also follow, that he is not only the most Communicative of all Beings, but that he will also Communicate *himself*: and not only so, but in such an *ample* and liberal measure too, as entirely to satisfy the most aspiring & reaching Appetite of man; Since Otherwise some de-

degrees of Communicativeness & consequently of Excellence would be wanting; which is absurd to suppose in a Being absolutely perfect. Especially considering, that those importunate desires of Human nature are of his *own* planting, which as it firmly assures us of his being *able*, so is it no less cogent an Argument for his being *willing* to be our Center; it being incredible that so infinite an Excellence should plant in man such desires, as either he *could not* or *would not* satisfy.

13. And of this willingness of God that man should partake of his *fulness*, so far as to bottom upon it, and acquiesce in it, there is yet further assurance from many express *Revelations* of his good pleasure to that purpose. Which consist of two kinds, express *words*, wherein he professes himself passionately desirous of the Salvation and happiness of man; and two very notable and signal *Acts*; namely, the consigning to the world a copy of his Will, as a *Chart* to direct us to the true Haven of *Rest* and *Anchorage*; and the sending his Beloved Son from the mansions of glory to dislodge the angry Guardian of Paradise, and re-open for us an Entrance into the *joy of our Lord*. By both which kinds of revelation he has given us the highest assurance imaginable, that he designs not to *engross* and monopolize the Perfections of his rich essence, but that he is heartily willing to admit man to a *participation* of that excellent

good, wherein he himself is Happy; to give him (as the Psalmist expresses it) *everlasting felicity, and make him glad with the joy of his countenance.*

14. To which Considerations I might further add, that this excellent communicativeness of the Divine nature is typically represented and mysteriously exemplify'd by the *Porphyrian* Scale of Being. For as there the lower degrees are *determin'd* and *contracted*, but the Higher more *common* and *extensive*, so is it in the *real* Scale of Being. The inferious, which are either matter, or complicated and twisted with matter, are more contracted, narrow, selfish and illiberal; but the superiour as they are less immers'd in and allay'd with matter, so are they more open, diffusive and free. For indeed all contraction and confinement is from *matter*, but 'tis *Form* and *Spirit* that is the Root of all freeness and inlargement. And thus we see in bodys; the more of kin they are to Spirit in subtilty and refinement, the more *spreading* are they and *self-diffusive*. Whereupon *Light*, which of all Bodys is neareſt ally'd to Spirit, is also most diffusive and self-communicative. God therefore, who is at the very top of all Being, who is an absolute, mere and Spiritual Act, and who lastly is such a *pure Light* as in which *there is no darkness at all*, must needs be infinitely self-imparting and Communicative; & consequently, wants nothing to qualify him to be the true End and Center of Man.

The

The Prayer.

MY God, my *Happineſs*, who art as well the *End* as the *Author* of my Being; who haſt more *perfection* than I have *deſires*, and art alſo ſeriouſly willing to quench my great Thirſt in the Ocean of thy Perfection; *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory*. Withdraw thy hand from the *Clift* of the rock, and remove the *bounds* from the *Mount* of thy Preſence, that I may ſee thee as thou art, face to face, and ever dwell in the light of thy Beauty. I have long dwelt with *Vanity* and *Emptineſs*, and have made my ſelf *weary* in the perſuit of *Reſt*. O let me not fail at laſt, after my many *wandrings* and diſappointments, to be taken up into this true and only *Ark* of repoſe and ſecurity, where I may for ever *reſt*, and for ever *bleſs* the Author of my Happineſs. In the mean time ſtrike, I beſeech thee, my Soul with ſuch lively and raviſhing apprehenſions of thy excellencies, ſuch bright irradiations of thy divine light, that I may ſee enough to love thee infinitely, to depend on thee for my happineſs entirely, to live upon holy hopes and comfortable expectations, and to bear up my Spirit under the greateſt Ariditys and dejections with the delightfull proſpect of thy Glorys. O let me *ſit down under*

this thy ſhadow with great delight, till the *fruit of thy Tree of life ſhall be ſweet to my taſt*. Let me ſtay and entertain my longing Soul with the Contemplation of thy Beauty, till thou ſhalt condeſcend to *kiſs me with the kiſſes of thy mouth*, till thou ſhalt bring me into thy *banqueting houſe*, where *Viſion* ſhall be the ſupport of my Spirit, and thy *Banner over me ſhall be Love*. Grant this O my God, my Happineſs, for the ſake of thy great love, and of the Son of thy love, Chriſt Jeſus. *Amen*.

Con-

Contemplation the Fifth.

Two Corollaries hence deduc'd: the first whereof is, that God is therefore to be loved with all possible application and elevation of Spirit, with all the heart, soul and mind.

1. AMong the Perfections of human nature the faculty of desiring or reaching out after agreeable Objects is not the least considerable, and 'tis the peculiar glory of man to be an *Amorous*, as well as a *Rational* Being. For by this he supplies the defects of his nature, not only *enjoys* the good he unites with, but *digests* it as it were into himself and makes it his own, and relieves his *domestic* poverty by *forreign negotiation.*

2. But tho the *Pathetic* part of man be one of the noblest perfections he is furnish'd with, yet so generally faulty are we in the due application and direction of this noble faculty, that to be pathetically and amorously dispos'd is lookt upon by some not as a *Perfection* but as a *Disease* of the Soul, and is condemn'd by a whole order of men as inconsistent with the Character of wisdom, according to that Stoical Aphorism, *Amare simul & sapere ipsi Jovi non datur.*

3. But certainly, *Eve* was intended as a Help for *Adam*, tho in the event she prov'd the in-

ſtrument of his ſeduction; and our Paſſions were given us to perfect and accompliſh our natures, tho by accidental miſapplications to unworthy objects they may turn to our degradation and diſhonour. We may indeed be *debaſed* as well as *innobled* by them, but then the fault is not in the large *Sails*, but in the ill *conduct* of the *Pilot*, if our Veſſel miſs the Haven. The Tide of our love can never run too high, provided it take a right *Channel*; our *Paſſion* then will be our higheſt *Wiſdom*: and he was no Stoic that ſaid, *as the Hart panteth after the water brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee O God.* And again, *my Soul is athirſt for God.* And again, *my Soul breaketh out for fervent deſire.* And again, *whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth that I deſire in compariſon of thee.*

Pſal. 42. Pſal. 119. Pſal. 73. 14.

4. Being therefore from the foregoing Periods arrived to this Concluſion, that God is the true End and Center of man, I think I ought now to let looſe the reins of my affections, to *unbay* the current of my Paſſion, and love on without any other boundary or meaſure than what is ſet me by the finiteneſs of my natural powers.

5. 'Tis true indeed, whenever we turn the *Edge* of our deſire towards any Created good, 'tis Prudence as well as Religion to uſe caution and moderation, to *gage* the *Point* of our affections leſt it run in too far, there being ſo much

Empti-

emptineſs in the *enjoyment*, and ſo much *hazard* in the *Poſſeſſion*. When we venture to lean upon ſuch objects we are like men that walk upon a *Quagmire*, and therefore ſhould tread as *lightly* as we can, leſt it give way and ſink under us.

6. But how excellent a Vertue ſoever *Moderation* may be in our concernments with other objects, we have nothing to do with it in the love of that Being who is our End and Center. There is here danger but of *one Extreme*, and that is of the *defect*. We can love but finitely when we have lov'd our utmoſt; and what is that to him who is infinitely lovely? Since therefore our moſt liberal proportions will be infinitely ſhort and ſcanty, we ought not ſure to give *new retrenchments* to our love, and cut it yet ſhorter by *frugal* limitations.

7. For if God be our End and Center he muſt neceſſarily have all that good in him which we can poſſibly deſire; and if ſo, then he is able to ſtay and ſatisfy all our Love; and if ſo, then nothing ſo reaſonable as that he ſhould have it all. We are therefore to love him with all poſſible application and elevation of Spirit, with all the *heart*, *Soul* and *mind*. We ſhould collect and *concenter* all the rays of our love into this one *Point*, and lean towards God with the whole weight of our Soul, as all that is ponderous in nature tends with its *whole* weight toward the *Center*. And this we ſhould do as *directly* as may be, with as little *warping* and declenſion

the Creature as is possible. For so also 'tis to be observ'd in nature, that not only all weight or *Pondus* tends toward the Center, but that also it moves thither as nigh as it can in a *direct* and *perpendicular* line.

The Prayer.

MY God, my Happiness, who art *fairer than the Children of men*, and who thy self art *very Love* as well as *altogether lovely, draw me and I will run after thee.* O wind up my Soul to the highest pitch of Love that my facultys will bear, and let me never alienate any degree of that noble Passion from thee its only due object. Quench in me all terrene fires and sensual relishes, and do thou wound me deep, and strike me through with the arrows of a divine Passion, that as thou art all *Beauty* and *Perfection*, so I may be all *Love* and *Devotion*. *My heart is ready* O God, *my heart is ready* for a Burnt offering; send down then an holy fire from above to kindle the Sacrifice, and do thou continually fan and keep alive, and clarify the flame, that I may be ever ascending up to thee in devout breathings, and pious Aspirations, till at length I ascend in Spirit to the *Element* of Love, where I shall know thee more clearly

and

and love thee more Seraphically, and receive those peculiar coronets of glory thou hast reserv'd for those that *eminently* love thee, *Amen.*

Contemplation the Sixth.

The second Corollary: that therefore God is ultimately to be refer'd to in all our actions, and that he is not to be used by us, but enjoyed.

1. AS there is nothing of greater and more universal moment to the regular ordination of human life, than rightly to accommodate the *Means* and the *End*, and to make them uniform and *Symbolical*; so is there nothing wherein men are more universally peccant and defective, and that not only in *Practice*, but also in *Notion* and *Theory*.

2. For altho to do an ill action for a good End, and to do a good action for an ill End, are generally acknowledg'd alike criminal, yet concerning this latter 'tis observable, that men usually think the morality of their actions sufficiently secured, if the End proposed be not in its own nature *specifically* evil. Whereas indeed there is yet another way whereby an End may become evil, namely, by being *rested* in when 'tis not the *last*, without any *further* respect or reference. By this undue and *ill-plac'd*

Acqui-

Acquieſcence, an End that is otherwiſe in its own intrinſic nature good, upon the whole commences evil. For tho it be good to be *choſen*, it is yet ill to be *reſted* in.

3. For indeed 'tis againſt the order and oeconomy of *things* as well as againſt the perfection of *Religion*, that any End ſhould be ultimately reſted in but what is truly the laſt. Now the laſt end of action can be no other than that which is the laſt end of the *will* which is, the *Spring* of *action*. This therefore being God (as appears from what I have already contemplated) it follows, that he ought to be the ultimate End of all our actions, that we ought not in any of our motions to ſtop *ſhort* of this Center, but in all our actions to make a further reference either actual or habitual, and according to that of the Apoſtle, *whether we eat or drink to do all to the glory of God.*

4. For what can be more abſurd and incongruous than to turn the Means into the End, and the End into the Means, to *enjoy* what ought to be only *uſed*, and to *uſe* what ought to be *enjoyed?* God is our *laſt End*, and therefore muſt not be deſired for any thing but himſelf, nor uſed as a *means* to accompliſh any other Deſign. Which alſo concludes againſt all thoſe who make Religion a Point of Secular intereſt, and a tool of *State-policy*, whereas *that* ought to *preſcribe*, and not *receive* meaſures from any *Human* affairs.

The

The Prayer.

MY God, my Happineſs, who art the laſt end of my *Deſires*, the very utmoſt of all Perfection, and beyond whom there is no good, be thou the laſt end of my *Actions* too, and let them all meet and unite in thee as *lines* in their *Center*. Grant I may ſet thee before me in all my thoughts, words and actions, let my eye of Contemplation be always open, and whatever *intermedial* deſigns I may have, let my *laſt* aim be thy *glory*. And O let me never be ſo low ſunk, baſe and wicked, as to make Religion an inſtrument of worldly policy, nor to diſhonour thee and my own Soul by ſuch a *mercenary* Piety. But do thou always poſſeſs my mind with ſuch a due value for thy infinite excellency, that I may refer all things to thee, and thee and thine to nothing, but love and embrace thee for thy own ſelf, who in thy ſelf alone art *altogether lovely*, Amen, Amen.

A DISCOURSE UPON ROMANS 12. 3.

—— Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; But to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of Faith.

THERE is nothing wherein men are so much *divided* from one another as in *Opinions*, and nothing wherein they more unanimously *conspire* than in *thinking well* of *themselves*. This is a Humour of so *Catholic* a *Stamp*, and universal *Empire*, that it may seem to challenge a place among those *Elements* of our Constitution, those *Essentials* of our nature which run throughout the *whole* Kind, and are participated by every *Individual*. For should a man *take the Wings of the Morning*, and travel with the Sun round the Terrestrial Globe, he would hardly find a man either of a *Judgment* so difficult to be *pleas'd*, or of *accomplishment* so *little*

tle to *recommend* him, that was not notwithstanding sufficiently in *love* with himself, however he might dislike every thing else about him; And without question that arrogant and peevish *Mathematician* who charged the grand *Architect* with want of skill in the *Mechanism* of the World, thought he had play'd the *Artist* well enough in *himself*, and as to the *Harmony* of his *own* frame acquitted the *Geometry* of his Maker.

2. And as men are thus naturally apt to think well of themselves in general, so there is nothing wherein they indulge this Humour more than in the Opinion they have of the *Goods* of the *Mind*, and among these there is none which has so great a share of their *Partiality*, as their *Intellectual* faculty. The *Desire* of Knowledg is not more natural then the *Conceit* that we are already furnish'd with a considerable Measure of it; and tho a particular *Sect* were Characteriz'd by that Appellation, yet all mankind are in reality, *Gnostics*. For as 'tis (ingeniously observ'd by the excellent *Cartesius*) nothing is more equally distributed among men than the *Intellectual Talent*, wherewith every one fancies himself so abundantly stockt, that even those who have the most *unsatiable* Desires, and whom Providence could not satisfy in any one thing else, are notwithstanding as to this *Dispensation* of Heaven well enough *content*, complain not of the dull Planet that influenc'd

Dissert. de Method. p. 1.

fluenc'd their Nativity, or wish their minds more *richly endow'd* than they are. And altho there are a *generation* of men who use to be very eloquent in setting out the degeneracy of human nature in general, and particularly in decyphering the *Shortness* of our *Intellectual Sight*, and the defects of our now *diminish'd* understanding, yet should a man take them at their word, and apply that *Verdict* to themselves in particular which they so *freely* bestow upon the whole Species, no men in the world so full of resentment and impatience as they; and I dare affirm notwithstanding their *Harangues* upon the Corruption of Human Nature, could all mankind lay a *true* claim to that *Estimate* which they pass upon *themselves*, there would be little or no difference betwixt *laps'd* and *perfect* Humanity, and God might again review his *image* with *paternal* Complacency, and still *pronounce* it *good*.

3. Nor is it at all to be wonder'd that *Self-Conceitedness* should be of such an unlimited and *Transcendental* Nature as to run through all Sorts and *Classes* of men, since the cause of it, *Self-love*, has such an universal *Jurisdiction* in our hearts. 'Tis most natural and necessary for every man (and indeed for every Intelligent Being) to be a Lover of himself, and to covet whatsoever any way tends to the perfection of his Nature. And as 'tis necessary for every man to be thus affected towards himself, so is this

the

the only Diſpoſition of mind wherein Man acts with Conſtancy and *Uniformity*. Our other Paſſions have ſomtimes their total intermiſſions, and at beſt their *increaſes* and *decreaſes*, but this is always at *Full*, and ſtands *drawn* out to the utmoſt *Stretch* of its Capacity. No man loves himſelf more at one time than at another, and that becauſe he always loves himſelf in the higheſt Degree that is poſſible. *More* than all good he *cannot* wiſh to himſelf, and *leſs* than all he *will* not, nay I had almoſt pronounc'd it impoſſible for Omnipotence it ſelf which *ſtays the proud waves* of the Ocean, and blocks up its violent efforts with *barrs and doors*, to ſay unto this Paſſion, *hitherto ſhalt thou come but no further*, or to ſet any other bounds to it beſides thoſe of all *poſſible* good.

Job 38. 10.

4. Now Man being ſuch an *infinite* Lover of himſelf, is eaſily brought to *believe* that he is really Maſter of many of thoſe excellencies and perfections, which he ſo paſſionately *wiſhes* among the *inventory* of his poſſeſſions. For there is this notorious difference betwixt *Self-love* and the *Love of others*, that whereas the Love of others *ſuppoſes* an opinion of their excellency, the love of our ſelves *begets* it. We *love* others becauſe we *think well* of them, but (ſo prepoſterous is the method of Self-love) we think well of our ſelves becauſe we firſt love our ſelves. So that now upon the whole, conſidering how neceſſarily and vehemently every man is carried

on

on to the love of himſelf, and what a natural product Self-conceit is of Self-love, 'tis much to be fear'd, that as we cannot ſet *any* bounds to the *love* of our ſelves, ſo we ſhall hardly ſet *due* ones to our *Opinions* of our ſelves, and conſequently the moſt mortify'd and reſign'd Man of us all, has no reaſon to think himſelf unconcern'd in this Admonition of the Apoſtle. ---*Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think; but to think ſoberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith.*

5. 'Tis ſuppoſed that the Apoſtle in theſe words had reſpect to the then prevailing Hereſy of the *Gnoſtics*, a ſort of men that pretended to great *Heights* of divine Knowledg, to cloſe intimacies and familiarities with God, and upon that preſumption grew ſo haughty and inſolent as to *deſpiſe dominions, and ſpeak evil of dignities*, and withall ſo careleſs and ſecure, as to *defile the fleſh*, and indulge themſelves all manner of Senſuality, as you may ſee their Character in the Epiſtle of St. *Jude*. Nay of ſuch turbulent ungovernable Principles and profligate manners were theſe men, that ſome of the Learned (and particularly an eminent Divine of our own Church) have adventured to write upon their Fore-heads, *Myſtery*, and to place them in the *Chair* of *Anti-Chriſt*. As an Antidote therefore againſt this Poiſon, the Apoſtle who through the *Abundance of Revelation* had himſelf been in dan-

Dr. Hammond.

2 Cor. 12. 7.

ger of being *exalted above Measure*, and experimentally knew how prone human nature is to *swell* and *plume* upon a Conceit of its own excellencies, thought it expedient to advise his Charge at *Rome* (the place which *Simon Magus* the Author of that proud Sect had (as *Euſebius* tells us) made choice of to be the *Scene* of his Magical Operations) to moderate and ſober thoughts of themſelves, and being to teach them a Leſſon of Humility, he modeſtly uſhers it in with a Preface of his Commiſſion and Authority. *For I ſay* (ſays he) *through the grace given unto me to every man that is among you not to think of himſelf more highly*, &c.

Hiſt. Eccl. l. 2. cap. 13.

6. The Diſcourſe which I deſign upon theſe words ſhall be comprized within theſe limits.

Firſt, I obſerve that we are not at our own liberty to entertain what Opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves, but that we ought to regulate them by ſome *Standard*. Which I collect from the former part of the Text, *Not to think of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly.*

7. Secondly, I obſerve that the *Standard* whereby we are to regulate our Opinions concerning our ſelves are thoſe excellencies and perfections which we are *really* indow'd with, which I collect from the latter part of the Text, *according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith.*

8. And

8. And in the third place I ſhall conſider the Abſurdities and ill Conſequences of tranſgreſſing this *Standard*, whereby it ſhall appear how highly reaſonable this *Admonition* of the Apoſtle is, and ſo conclude with a practical Application of the whole in relation to our ſelves, and the preſent occaſion.

9. I begin with the firſt Propoſition, *That we are not at our own liberty to entertain what Opinions we pleaſe concerning our ſelves, but that we ought to regulate them by ſome Standard.*

10. The Acts of the *underſtanding* are by ſome men thought as free from all *Law* as the Acts of the *will* are from all *neceſſity*, and accordingly they give every one a *Toleration* to *abound in his own ſenſe* and (provided his *actions* be conformable to the Rule) to *think* what he pleaſe. Now ſince a Man cannot be accountable for an *Opinion* of *himſelf* in particular, unleſs it be firſt granted that he is under a Law as to the Acts of his *underſtanding* in general, before I can proceed any farther I find it neceſſary to lay down this *Preparatory* Poſition, That we are under an Obligation as to the Acts of our underſtanding, or (which is all one) that we are accountable for them. Nay I believe I may venture higher, and affirm that the underſtanding is not only under Obligation, but that 'tis the *Primary* and *immediat* Subject of it. For the proof of which Paradox, I deſire the Patrons of the *Intellectual Libertiniſm* to conſider, that

that muſt be the Primary and immediat ſubject of all *Obligation* which is ſo of *Liberty*. Now that this cannot be the *Will*, I ſuppoſe will be acknowledg'd a clear conſequence, if the Will neceſſarily follows the Practical Dictate of the Underſtanding. And that it does ſo, I think there is *Demonſtration*.

11. 'Tis an unqueſtionable Axiom in all the Schools of Learning in the world, that the Object of the Will is *apparent* good; Now apparent good in other words, is that which is apprehended or judg'd to be good, and if ſo, then it follows that the Will cannot but conform to the Dictate of the Underſtanding, becauſe otherwiſe ſomthing might be the object of the Will that is not apprehended good, which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. In ſhort, the Will (as *Aquinas* has well expreſſed it) is the *Concluſion* of an *Operative Syllogiſm*, and follows as neceſſarily from the *Dictate* of the Underſtanding as any other Concluſion does from its Premiſes, and conſequently cannot be the *immediat* ſubject of Liberty, and conſequently not of Obligation.

12. But then are we not involv'd in the ſame difficulty as to the *underſtanding?* Does not that act with equal (if not more) neceſſity than the *Will?* So I know it is ordinarily taught. But if this be abſolutely and univerſally true, I muſt confeſs it above the reach of my Capacity to ſalve the Notion of Morality, or Religion, or

to

to find out an expedient how the *Foundations* of the *Intellectual* world ſhould not be *out of courſe*. For ſince 'tis evident both from the preceding Demonſtration, and from experimental Reflection, that the Will neceſſarily acts in Conformity to the Dictates of the Underſtanding, if thoſe very Dictates are alſo wholly and altogether neceſſary, there can be no ſuch thing as a τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, the man is bound hand and foot, has nothing left whereby to render him a Moral Agent, to qualify him for Law or Obligation, Vertue or Vice, Reward or Puniſhment. But theſe are Abſurdities not to be indured, and therefore I conclude according to the Rules of right Reaſoning, the *Principle* from which they flow to be ſo too.

13. To clear up then the whole Difficulty with as much Brevity and Perſpicuity as in a matter of this intricacy is poſſible, I ſhall no longer conſider the Underſtanding and Will as Faculties really diſtinct either from the Soul it ſelf, or from one another, but that the Soul does immediatly underſtand and will by it ſelf, without the intervention of any Faculty whatſoever. And that for this demonſtrative reaſon in ſhort, becauſe in the contrary Hypotheſis, either *Judgment* muſt be aſcribed to the Will, and then the will immediatly commences Underſtanding, or the Aſſent of the will muſt be blind, brutiſh, and unaccountable, both which are as great Abſurdities as they are true Conſe-

quences. This being premiſed, I grant that as the Soul neceſſarily wills as ſhe underſtands, ſo likewiſe does ſhe neceſſarily underſtand as the Object appears. And thus far our ſight *terminates* in *Fatality*, and *Neceſſity* bounds our *Horizon*. That then that muſt give us a *Proſpect* beyond it, muſt be this, that altho the Soul neceſſarily underſtands or judges according to the Appearance of things, yet that things ſhould ſo *appear* (unleſs it be in Propoſitions that are ſelf-evident, as that the whole is greater than any one part, or the like) is not alike neceſſary, but depends upon the degrees of Advertency or Attention which the Soul uſes, and which to uſe either more or leſs is fully and immediatly in her own power. And this indifferency of the Soul as to attending or not attending I take to be the only τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν, the bottom and foundation into which the Morality of every action muſt be at length reſolv'd. For a farther proof as well as Illuſtration of which Hypotheſis let us apply it to a particular caſe and try how well it will anſwer the *Phænomena*. In the caſe then of *Martyrdom*, I look upon ſin as an evil, and not only ſo but (while I attend fully to its Nature) the greateſt of evils. And as long as I continue this Judgment 'tis utterly impoſſible I ſhould commit it, there being according to my preſent apprehenſion no *greater* evil for the declining of which I ſhould think it eligible. But now the evil of *Pain* being preſented

before

before me, and I not ſufficiently attending to the evil of Sin, this latter appears to be the leſſer evil of the two, and I accordingly *pro hic & nunc* ſo pronounce it, and in Conformity to that judgment *neceſſarily* chuſe it. But becauſe 'twas abſolutely in my power to have *attended* more heedfully there was Liberty in the Principle, the miſtake which influenc'd the action was vincible, and conſequently the action it ſelf imputable. This *Hypotheſis* however ſtrange it may ſeem to thoſe that have ſworn Faith and Allegiance to the Dictates of the Schools, I believe will be the more approv'd the more it is examin'd, and that not only as rational and conſiſtent in it ſelf, but alſo as a refuge from thoſe Abſurdities which attend the ordinary Solutions. Neither is this account wholly *unlicens'd* by Authority, for I find ſome hints and intimations of it in the * *School* of *Plato*, where the reaſon why thoſe middle ſort of Beings call'd Heroes are not ſo uniformly pure as the Ἀγγέλοι θεοί or Νόες, is aſſign'd to be becauſe they do not ſo equally *attend* to the *Beauty* of the *Supream Good.*

* *See* Hierocles *upon the Golden Verſes of* Pythagoras.

14. From what has been ſaid it appears plainly that the Morality of every human action muſt be at length reſolv'd into an immediat indifference that the Soul has of *attending* or not *attending*, and conſequently that we are not only under Obligation as to the acts of the Underſtanding, but that all Obligation *begins* there.

15. Having thus clear'd the way by the Proof of this Preparatory Position, that we are under Obligation as to the acts of the Understanding in general, I may now proceed to consider that our opinion of our selves is *one* of those acts of the Understanding which are subject to Law, or in other terms, that *we are not at our own liberty to entertain what Opinions we please concerning our selves, but that we ought to regulate them by some Standard.* Now the general reason of this is, because 'tis of great moment and influence in relation to our Practice, what Opinion we entertain concerning our selves. Indeed there are many acts of the Understanding which tho originally *free*, yet fall under no Obligation by reason of the *Indifferency* of the Matter, as in things of pure and naked Speculation. These are the *unforbidden* Trees of the Garden, and here we may let loose the Reins and indulge our thoughts the full Scope. Thus there is no danger of *Heresy* in asserting or denying the *Antipodes*, nor is *Orthodoxy* concern'd whether the *Moon* be *habitable*. But altho to mistake a Star be of no consequence to the *Theorist* that sits immured in his Study, yet it may be to the *Pilot* that is to *Steer* his *Course* by it. There are *other* things which have a *practical* Aspect, and here 'tis not *indifferent* what we *think*, because 'tis not *indifferent* what we *do*. Now among these the Opinion of our selves is to be reckon'd, as having a great influence upon

on our well or ill demeaning our ſelves reſpectively, as will more minutely and particularly appear when we come in the third and laſt place to conſider the abſurdities and ill conſequences of tranſgreſſing the *Standard* preſcribed, and therefore I ſhall defer the farther proſecution of it till then, and in the mean while proceed to the ſecond *Obſervable*, Namely,

That the Standard whereby we are to regulate our Opinions concerning our ſelves, are thoſe excellencies and perfections which we are really endow'd with. Which is collected from theſe words, *according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of Faith.*

16. In the former part of the Text there was indeed a Reſtraint laid upon our Opinions concerning our ſelves, but it was general only and indefinite. But here the ground is meaſured out, and the Boundaries preciſely ſet. Μέτρον πίστεως, that's the great *Ecliptic Line* which is to bound the Career of our moſt forward and *Self-indulging* Opinions. If we keep within this compaſs our motion is natural and regular, but if we ſlide never ſo little out of it, 'tis unnatural and portentous. Or to ſpeak with greater Simplicity, he that judges of himſelf according to thoſe excellencies, whether Moral or Intellectual, which he really has, does φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *thinks ſoberly*, and he that thinks himſelf indow'd with any *Kind* or *Degree* of Excellence which really he has not, does ὑπερφρονεῖν παρ'

παρ' ὁ δεῖ φρονεῖν, *thinks of himself more highly than he ought to think.*

17. Here then are Two things to be considered.

First that we may proceed so *far* as this *Standard.*

And Secondly, That we may not go *beyond* it.

First, That we may proceed so far.

18. It has been taught by some of the severe Masters of *Spiritual Mortification,* That we ought to take up the most low and abject thoughts of our selves that are possible, to be conscious of no manner of excellency in our selves, and consequently not to be affected with the least *Self-complacency*; That we ought to account our selves to be Nothing, to have nothing, to be worth nothing, but to be very *refuse and off-scouring of all things.* And this they call the *Mystical Death,* or the *Spiritual Annihilation.* Now whatever degrees of *excellency* this may have (which I shall not now dispute) 'tis most certain it can have nothing of *Duty.* For tho it may, and oftentimes is required of a man to think the *Truth,* yet he can never be under an Obligation to be *mistaken.* Besides, 'Tis hard to conceive how any man (especially one that *dwells* much with himself, and heedfully reflects upon the actings of his own mind) should be master of any considerable excellency, and yet not be conscious of it. And besides, That very degree of Attention which is required that

1 Cor. 4. 13.

that a man ſhould not think himſelf *more* accompliſh'd than indeed he is, will alſo infallibly hinder him from thinking he is *leſs*. 'Tis true indeed *Moſes* knew not that his Face ſhone, after he had been converſing with God on the Mount. He ſaw not the Orb of glory that ſtream'd from him, and wondred what it was that made him ſo dreadful to the people. But 'tis not ſo with the Soul, whoſe reflexive faculty will not fail to give her information of her moſt retir'd and reſerv'd accompliſhments. 'Tis not with the *Leſſer*, as with the *Greater* World, where whole Tracts and Regions (and thoſe ſome of the beſt too) lye undiſcover'd. No, Man cannot be ſuch a *Stranger* to his own Perfections, ſuch an *America* to himſelf. For *who can know the things of a man, if not the Spirit of man which is in him.* And accordingly we find that the *ignorance* of our ſelves with which Mankind has been hitherto ſo univerſally tax'd, runs quite in another Channel, and does not conſiſt in *overlooking* any of thoſe indowments which we *have*, but in *aſſuming* to our ſelves thoſe which we *have not*.

19. I confeſs (were it poſſible) I ſhould think it adviſable for ſome perſons to be ignorant of ſome of their excellencies, and like the Sun not to *reflect* home to their own *Sphere* of *light*; Not that I think in the leaſt *unlawful* to be fully conſcious of ones own worth, but only I conſider that ſome men have not heads ſtrong enough

to

to *endure* Heights, and walk upon *Spires* and *Pinnacles*. But if they can ſtand there without growing *vertiginous*, they need not queſtion the lawfulneſs of the *ſtation*, they are ſtill within the *Region* of *Humility*. For 'tis not every thinking well of ones ſelf that falls in with the notion of *Pride*, but only when there is more of *Opinion* than there is of *Worth*. 'Twas this that was the Condemnation of the Apoſtate Angel, not that he took a juſt complacency in the eminency of his Station, but that he vainly arrogated to himſelf what was not his *due*, in that he ſaid, Iſai. 14. 13. *I will aſcend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the Stars of God, I will ſit upon the ſides of the North, I will aſcend above the heights of the Clouds, I will be like the moſt High.* 'Twas for this that the Angel of *Death* drew upon *Herod*, not becauſe he was pleas'd with the *fineneſs* and *ſucceſs* of his Oratory, but becauſe he was not ſo *juſt* to *God* as the People were to *him*, but lookt upon himſelf as the *Head-fountain* of his own perfections, and ſo Acts 12. 23. *gave not God* the *glory*.

20. But now if we take care to proportion our eſtimation *of*, and our Complacencies *in* our ſelves to the meaſure of our endowments, and if we look upon thoſe very endowments not as *originary* and independent but as *derivative* James 1. 17. from the *Father* of *lights from whom every good and perfect gift deſcends*, and accordingly refer all to Gods glory, and with the

the Elders in the Revelations take off our Crowns from our Heads and caſt them at the foot of the Throne, we have not only the expreſs words of the Text, but likewiſe all the reaſon in the world to warrant the *Sobriety* of our Opinions. For, this is but to have a right and exact underſtanding of ones ſelf. And why may not a man be allow'd to take a true Eſtimate of himſelf as well as of another man? Or why ſhould a man think an excellency leſs valuable becauſe 'tis in himſelf? The Happineſs of God conſiſts in ſeeing himſelf *as he is*; he reflects upon the *Beauty* of his Eſſence, and rejoyces with an infinite *Complacency*. Now certainly that wherein conſiſts the *Happineſs* of the *Creator*, cannot be a *Sin* in the *Creature*. Beſides, I would fain know why a man may not as lawfully think well of himſelf upon the Score of his real worth, as *deſire* that *others* ſhould think well of him for the ſame reaſon? And that he may do the latter is confeſs'd as well by the *Practice*, as by the common *Suffrage* of Mankind. For otherwiſe what becomes of that *good Reputation* which *Solomon* ſays *is rather to be choſen than great Riches*, and of which the Beſt and Wiſeſt men of all ages had ever ſuch a tender, ſuch a paſſionate Regard? Nay 'tis lookt upon as a very *Commendable* thing to be ſo affected, and the contrary is cenſured as the mark of a diſſolute and *unmoraliz'd* temper. Only there is a Μέτρον & Κανὼν to be

Rev. 4. 10.

Prov. 22. 1.

1 Cor. 10. 13.

be obſerv'd in this as well as in the former, and as we are not to *ſtretch out our ſelves beyond our meaſure*, ſo muſt we take care with the great Apoſtle, not to give *others* occaſion to *think of us above that which they ſee us to be.* Beſides, if we may not be allow'd to *take the* full *Height* of our own Excellencies, how ſhall we be able to give God thanks for them? The *Elders* muſt know they *wear Crowns* before they can uſe them as Inſtruments of Adoration, and *Herod* muſt be conſcious of the right *Genius* of his Oratory, before he *can give God the Glory.* Again in the laſt place, if a man may not have leave to take Cogniſance of his own Deſerts and to value himſelf accordingly, what will become of that συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώτημα εἰς Θεὸν which the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God,* which is nothing elſe but a Sentence of Approbation, which a man paſſes upon himſelf for the well managing of that *Talent* of Liberty which God has entruſted him with? Now this is the *Reward* of Vertue, and therefore certainly not *contrary* to it.

2 Cor. 10. 13.

2 Cor. 12. 6.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

21. Neither is this *Self-eſteem* only the *Reward* of Vertue but alſo the *Cauſe* of it too, and conſequently 'tis not only *allowable*, but alſo highly *needful* that we ſhould think *Honorably* of our ſelves. 'Tis a frequent Obſervation among *Moral* and *Divine* Writers, That moſt if not all the

the Sins which men commit, proceed from want of a due ſenſe of the Dignity of their Nature. And conſequently a due reflection upon a man's own Worth, muſt needs be a ſtrong *Preſervative* againſt whatſoever would *ſtain* its *Glory*. *Shall ſuch a man as I flee?* was the powerful conſideration that *buoy'd* up the *ſinking* Spirits of *Nehemiah*. And 'tis one of the *Capital* Precepts of *Pythagoras*'s Morals (and perhaps one of the beſt too that was ever given to the World) —— Πάντων μάλιστα αἰδοῦ σαυτόν. *Above all things reverence thy ſelf*. And 'twas the Saying of another of the Sons of Wiſdom, *Let not the Reverence of any man cauſe thee to ſin*. Which it certainly will do, unleſs we obſerve the former Rule, and reflect with due *Reverence* upon our own Worth and Dignity. Neh. 6. 11.

22. From theſe Conſiderations (not to urge any more) it ſeems to me very evident, that 'tis not only *lawful* but in ſome reſpects highly *Expedient*, that our Opinions of our ſelves ſhould riſe up ſo as to be of a *Level* with our Excellencies, whatſoever they are. Let one of the Scales be mounted never ſo *high*, yet if there be a proportionable *Weight* in the *Other*, the Ballance moves regularly, and as it ſhould do. We may then proceed ſo *far* as this *Standard*.

23. But Secondly, We muſt not go *beyond* it. For all beyond this is *Pride*. Pride, that turn'd the Angels out of Heaven, *Adam* out of Paradice, and levell'd the great King of *Babylon*

Dan. 4. 33. *lon* with the *Beaſts that periſh;* and which is nothing elſe but an *Intemperate* Opinion of our ſelves, which conſiſts either in aſſuming to our ſelves any Excellency which we have not, or in *Over-rating* what we have. Tho indeed in *Strictneſs* of Notion this latter falls in with the former, For to *Over-rate* what we have, is indeed to aſſume ſome *Degree* of good which we have not. Here then begins our Reſtraint, the *Reaſonableneſs* of which will appear from the Abſurdities and ill Conſequences which attend the tranſgreſſing of this *Standard*, and which in the third and laſt place I come now to conſider.

24. I ſhall obſerve only the moſt notorious; and theſe I ſhall reduce to theſe Three general Heads.

Firſt, That it unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties.

Secondly, That it betrays us into many ſins.

And Thirdly, That it fruſtrates all methods of Reformation. Of theſe very briefly.

25. Firſt an exceſſive opinion of our ſelves (and that is ſo which ſurpaſſes the meaſure of our real worth) unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties; and that both in relation to God, our Neighbour and our Selves.

Firſt in relation to God.

26. As *Folly* leads to *Atheiſm*, ſo does an *overweening* opinion of our own *Wiſdom* or any other excellency to *Profaneneſs*. For as *the Fool*

has

has ſaid in his heart there is no God, ſo it is ſaid in another place That the *ungodly is ſo Proud that he careth not for him.* Pride Pſal. 10. 4. then is altogether inconſiſtent with that Subjection, Honour and Veneration which we owe to God. For how can he ſubmit his paſſions to the *Authority* of the *Divine Will* who has made a *Law* of his *own*? And as it indiſpoſes us for all *active*, ſo likewiſe for all *paſſive* Obedience; for how can he *ſuffer* that with *Patience*, which he thinks he does not *deſerve* in *Juſtice*? Or how can he ſubmit with *reſignation* to the ſeeming unevenneſſes of Providential Diſpenſations, the equality of which becauſe he cannot *diſcern*, he muſt in *honour* to his own underſtanding *deny*? And upon the ſame ground it unqualifies us for *Faith* in many of the Divine Revelations. For how can he *Captivate* his underſtanding to *Myſteries*, who thinks it a diſhonour to *own* any, and is reſolv'd to *believe* no farther than he can *comprehend*?

27. Laſtly, It unqualifies us for *Gratitude* towards God, and conſequently puts a Bar to all thoſe good actions which we would otherwiſe perform upon that *Principle*. And by this it becomes a *Multiplied*, a *Legion* evil. For how can he acknowledg an Obligation paſs'd upon him by Gods *Favours*, who calls them not by that name, but eſteems them as *Rewards* and *Payments*, and inverting the Proteſtation of the good *Patriarch*, thinks him- Gen. 22. 10.

ſelf *worthy* of the *greateſt* of his *mercies*.

28. Then Secondly, In relation to our Neighbour, it unqualifies us for Obedience to Civil Government. For how can he ſubmit to the Wiſdom of his Superiours, and pay an *implicite* deference to the *Occult* reaſons of State, who thinks himſelf wiſer than a whole *Senate*, and diſputes even the ways of *Providence?* Pride was ever obſerved to be the Mother of Faction and Rebellion, and accordingly St. *Jude* makes it part of the *Character* of the Proud *Gnoſtics*, *To deſpiſe Dominions and ſpeak evil of Dignities*.

29. Again, It unqualifies us for thoſe acts of Juſtice which conſiſt in a due obſervation of our Neighbours Merits, and a deference of external Reſpect proportionable to that obſervation. For how can he be at *leaſure* to take notice of *anothers* worth, who is ſo wholly taken up in the *contemplation* of his *own?* Let the Reputation of his beſt Friends (if it be poſſible for a Proud man to have any) be in never ſo great danger, he like *Archimedes*, is ſo overbuſie in admiring the Creatures of his own brain, thoſe *Draughts* and *Ideas* which he has form'd of *himſelf* there, that he regards not the *Ruin* that is about him. Or if he does, he is ſo far from appearing in their defence (as in Juſtice he ought) that he rather rejoyces at their *Spots* as *Acceſſions* to his own *brightneſs*.

30. Again, It unqualifies us for the Offices of Humanity, and Civil Behaviour, and all

kinds

kinds of *Homilitical* virtue: for how can he treat those with any tolerable Civility, whom he looks down upon as a whole *Species* below him?

31. Lastly, it unqualifies us for Gratitude toward our Benefactors. For how can he think himself obliged by *man*, who counts *God* his *Debtor*?

32. Then Thirdly, In relation to our Selves, here is this grand ill consequence of an immoderate self-esteem, that it unqualifies us not only for higher attainments, but even for the very *endeavours* of improvement, and so cuts short and *bedwarfs* all our excellencies. 'Tis the Observation of *Cicero*, *Multi ad scientiam pervenissent nisi se jam pervenisse credidissent*, The *Opinion* of the Proud man has so far got the *start* of the real *worth*, that the *latter* will never *overtake* the *former*.

33. And as the immoderate esteem of our Selves unqualifies us for the performance of many Duties, so does it also in the second place Betray us into many Sins.

34. First, Into all those sins which are contrary to the forementionꝺ Vertues respectively. And besides them into many more, such as are presumption and security, vexation and discontent, contempt of others (tho at the same time it exposes us to theirs) Anger and Contention, Malice and Revenge. For the Proud man is not content to be his own *private* Admirer,

but quarrels with all others that are not of his perſwaſion, and with the *Tyrant* of *Babylon* kindles a *fire* for thoſe who will not *fall down and worſhip the Image which he has ſet up.*

35. Neither does the *Leproſy* ſtop here. But as it betrays us into many ſins, ſo in the Third and laſt place (which is the moſt diſmal Conſequence of all) It fruſtrates all Methods of Reformation. Gods judgments will but exaſperate and inrage him, becauſe he thinks he does *not* deſerve them, and his Mercies will not indear him, becauſe he thinks he *does*. *Advice* he thinks he does not *need*, and *Reproof* he cannot *bear*. Beſides he thinks ſo well of himſelf already, that he wonders what you *mean* by adviſing him to become *better*, and therefore as he does not endeavour after any of thoſe excellencies which he thinks he has, ſo neither can he dream of mending thoſe faults which he thinks he is not guilty of: Thus is the man *Seal'd* up to iniquity, and deeply *lodg'd* in the *ſtrong holds* of ſin, where nothing that has a Salutary Influence can come nigh him. And in this he reſembles the firſt *Preſidents* of his Folly, who from Angels transform'd themſelves into Devils, and fell beyond the *poſſibilities* of *recovery*.

36. Theſe are ſome of the fruits of this *Root of Bitterneſs*, and tho more might be named, yet theſe I think ſufficient to juſtify this Admonition of the *Apoſtle* to every man, *not to think*

of

of himſelf more highly than he ought to think, but to think ſoberly, according as God has dealt to every man the meaſure of faith. Let us then all endeavour to conform our opinions concerning our ſelves to this *Standard.* Let us not ſtretch our ſelves beyond our *natural dimenſions,* but learn to entertain modeſt and ſober thoughts of our own excellencies and endowments, and mortify our *underſtandings* as well as our *ſenſitive affections.* And thus ſhall we *compleat* our *Lent* Exerciſe by joyning the mortification of the *Spirit* to that of the *fleſh,* without which the greateſt Auſterities wherewith we can afflict the *latter,* will not be *ſuch a Faſt as God has choſen.* For what will it avail to macerate the Body, while the principal part the Soul remains unmortify'd? The *Humility* of Moſes muſt conſpire with his Forty days *Faſting* to qualify a man for Divine Intercourſes, to make him the Joy of Angels, the *Friend of God.* Thus then let us accompliſh the *Refinings* of our Souls, and fill up the *Meaſure* of our Mortifications. To which end let us add this one further Conſideration to what has been already ſaid, that Humility in the Judgment even of the *High and Lofty one that inhabits Eternity,* is a Vertue of ſuch great Excellency, and ſingular advantage to the happineſs of Mankind, that our Bleſſed Saviour came down from Heaven to teach it, that his whole life was one continu'd Exerciſe of it, and that he has dignify'd it with

the *first* place among his *Beatitudes*. Let us then, as many as profess the Religion of the Humble and Crucify'd JESUS, make it our strict Care that we neglect not this his *great* Commandment, nor omit to Copy out this Principal Line, this main stroke of the Pattern he has set us. Especially let us of this place who are set among the *greater Lights* of the Firmament, and whose profession and business is to contemplate *Truth*, and to think of things as God made them, in *Number*, *Weight* and *Measure*, labour in the *first* place to take just and true Measures of our *Selves*, that our *Knowledg puff us* not *up*, nor our *Height* become our *Ruin*.

CONSIDERATIONS
UPON THE
NATURE
OF
SIN.

Accommodated to the ends both of *Speculation* and *Practise.*

Conſiderations upon the Nature of Sin, &c.

SECT. I.

Of the diviſion of Sin into Material and Formal, and of the reality and neceſſity of that Diſtinction.

1. TO make this our Diſcourſe about Sin more clear and diſtinct, before we enter upon its Nature 'twill be requiſite to premiſe ſomthing concerning the double acceptation of the word. For nothing can be *defined* before it be *diſtinguiſh'd*.

2. I obſerve therefore, that Sin may be conſider'd either *abſtractedly*, for the bare act of Obliquity, or *concretely* with ſuch a *ſpecial* dependence of it upon the will as renders the Agent *guilty*, or obnoxious to puniſhment. I ſay with ſuch a *ſpecial* dependence of it upon the will; for not every dependence of an action upon the will is ſufficient to make it *imputable*, as ſhall be ſhewn hereafter. The former of theſe, by thoſe that diſtinguiſh more nicely, is call'd *tranſgreſſio voluntatis*, the latter *tranſgreſſio voluntaria*, or according to the more ordinary diſtinction the former is the *material*, the latter the *formal* part of Sin.

3. This

3. This distinction is both *real* and *necessary*. 1. it is *real*, because the Idea or conception of *material* sin is not only distinct from the Idea of *formal* sin (as it may be in things really the same) but when consider'd as *alone* does positively exclude the other. For this notion, *a bare act of Obliquity*, does not only *prescind from*, but also *positively deny* such a special dependence of it upon the will as makes it imputable for punishment.

4. Now as it is a certain sign of *Identity* when the Idea of one thing necessarily includes the Idea of another, so is it of *real distinction* when the Idea of one thing in any case positively excludes the Idea of the other. There may indeed be distinct conceptions of one and the same thing, whereof there are different Propertys or Degrees, but then one does only *abstract from*, and not in any case *positively exclude* the other. Which when it does it is an evident sign of *real distinction*.

5. But the greatest Argument of real distinction is *separability* and *actual separation*. For nothing can be separated from it self. And this also has place here. For the *material* part of sin may actually exist without the *formal*. That is, there may be an act of obliquity, or an irregular act without any guilt deriv'd upon the Agent, or to speak more strictly, without that *special* dependence of the act upon the will which is the *foundation* of that guilt. This is evi-

evident in the case of *fools* and *mad men*.

6. And as this Distinction is *real*, so also is it very *useful* and *necessary*. 1st in the *notion*, to prevent ambiguitys and fallacys, that might arise from the use of the word (sin). As when St. John says, *he that commits sin is of the Devil*, certainly 'twould be a fallacy to argue hence that every mere act of obliquity is *Diabolical*, because a sin, since not *material* but *formal* sin was the thing intended in Saint *John*'s Proposition. John 3. 8.

7. 2ly in the *thing*, for the honour and vindication of the Divine Attributes. Particularly from the damning of Infants merely for the corruption of nature, commonly call'd Original sin; It being repugnant to the measures of Justice and the Dictates of Common Sense, that the bare doing an irregular act, or the bare having an irregular propension should be *punishable at all*, much more with *eternal damnation*, as it must be if *every* dependence of an action upon the will be enough to render it imputable, that is, if every *material* be also a *formal* sin. This I say would be very unjust, because such irregular acts are no more a man's own than those committed by another man.

8. But it is certain that God does not proceed by such measures; as may be gather'd from the Oeconomy of his severest dispensation, the *Law*. For when he forbad murther with such strictness and severity, as to order the murtherer

to

SECT. II.

A more particular and explicit consideration of Material sin, and what it adds to the general nature of evil.

1. AFter our Distinction of sin into *Material* and *Formal*, and our justification of that distinction, it follows that in the next place we give some more particular and explicit account of the nature of *Material* sin. That it is an *irregular act* in general, was intimated before, but to speculate its nature more thoroughly we must set it in a clearer light, and define what it is that makes an action irregular. And the account which I shall give of this, I shall ground upon that Definition of St. *John*, who tells us that *sin is a transgression of the Law*. So that transgression of the Law is the *irregularity* of an action, and is more explicitly the *Material* part of sin.

2. Thus far in *general*. But now to make Transgression of the Law fully adequate and commensurate to *Material* sin, so as to extend to all kinds of it, it concerns us in the next place to enquire, what is here to be understood by *(Law)* and upon the right stating of this, will depend the whole *Theory* of *Material sin*.

3. By

3. By Law therefore in the firſt place, is to be underſtood that which is *Poſitive*, that is, any rule of action preſcribed to us by God, conſider'd only *as preſcribed*. Any action ſo preſcribed, be it otherwiſe never ſo indifferent for the *matter*, puts on the force of a *Law* from the *Authority* of the Preſcriber, and every tranſgreſſion of ſuch a Rule is *Sin*.

4. But the Tranſgreſſion of Law in this narrow ſenſe of the word will not comprehend all the kinds of *Material* ſin. For altho Poſitive Law creates the *firſt* difference in *ſome* things, yet it does not in *all*. For had God never made any *Poſitive* Law yet the doing of *ſome* actions would have been *ſin*, nay there was ſin where there was no Poſitive Law, as may be probably collected from the fall of *Angels*. But where there is no Law there is no Tranſgreſſion. There muſt be therefore ſome other law beſides *Poſitive* Law.

5. By Law therefore 2ly is to be underſtood the Law of *Reaſon*, that Candle of the Lord that lights every man that comes into the world in his paſſage through it. This is twofold. For 1ſt, by the Law of Reaſon may be underſtood that Original ſtock of *rational Tendencys* or practical ſentiments which prevent all Diſcourſe and reaſonings about what is to be done, and anſwer to *Speculative Principles*. For as the Animal and ſenſitive Nature is not only furniſh'd with Senſe and Perception, but alſo with certain

certain connatural inſtincts and impreſſions, whereby Animals are directed and inclined to *ſenſitive good*, ſo for the guardianſhip and ſecurity of Vertue, againſt the danger either of *ignorance* or *inadvertence*. God has furniſh'd the Rational nature not only with the faculty of reaſoning, but with certain common Principles and Notions, whereby 'tis inclined to the good of the *Reaſonable* life. This is the νόμος ἔμψυχος ſo much talkt of, and that which men generally mean by the *Law of Nature*.

6. Or elſe 2ly, by the Law of Reaſon may be underſtood a Power, which a Rational Creature has of finding out by diſcourſing from firſt Principles what is fit to be done, and of reflecting upon the reaſonableneſs of thoſe Moral *Anticipations* and impreſſions, which he *before* entertain'd, tho he knew not upon what *ground*.

7. Theſe two make up the adequate notion of the Law of *Reaſon*, but we are not yet come to the adequate notion of *Law*. For if the Law of Reaſon be taken in the firſt ſenſe for a ſtock of Moral Anticipations implanted by God in the Soul, this will be but another branch of *Poſitive* Law. For *Light* of *Nature* and *Light* of *Scripture* are but different modes of Divine revelation, and neither of theſe can be the *ultimate* Reaſon, into which the Morality of every action is to be reſolv'd.

8. But if the Law of Reaſon be taken in the latter ſenſe, for a Power which a Rational Creature

Creature has of finding out by diſcourſe what is reaſonable to be done, this will of neceſſity lead us *higher*, namely to conſider that there are certain antecedent and independent *aptneſſes* or qualitys in things, with reſpect to which they are fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wiſe governour of the world in ſome *poſitive* Law, whether that of internal or external Revelation, or both.

9. We are therefore in the next place to reſolve theſe antecedent aptneſſes of things into their proper *ground*, or to aſſign what that is which makes an action *fit* to be *commanded* or *forbidden*. Which when we have done we are advanced as high as we can go, and have found out that ſupreme, eternal and irreverſible Law, which preſcribes meaſures to all the reſt, and is the *laſt* Reaſon of *good* and *evil*.

10. That therefore which makes an action fit to be commanded or forbidden by the wiſe governour of the world, can be nothing elſe in *general*, but its reſpective tendency to prompt or hinder the attainment of ſome certain *end* or other, which that *governour* propoſes. For all action being *for* ſome end, and not *the* End *it ſelf*, its aptneſs to be commanded or forbidden muſt be founded upon its ſerviceableneſs or diſſerviceableneſs to ſome end. So much in general.

11. I further conſider, that this end muſt be that which is ſimply and abſolutely the *beſt* and

greatest. For no other is worthy of *God*. Now certainly there is none better or greater than the *universal good* of the whole Sisteme of things, which is therefore to be regarded and prosecuted to the utmost both by *God* and all other *Intelligent* Beings.

12. And hence arises this first and great *Canon* or *Law*, that whatever naturally tends to the promotion of the common intereſt is *good* and apt to be *commanded*, and whatever naturally tends to the disintereſt of the public, is *evil* and apt to be *forbidden*. This is the great *Basis* of Morality, the fixt and immutable standard of good and evil, and the *fundamental* Law of Nature.

13. And becauſe there are ſome actions *in ſpecie*, which with relation to the preſent ſyſteme both of the Material and Intellectual world, have ſuch a *natural* connexion with the furtherance or prejudice of this great end, therefore theſe by way of *Aſſumption* under the two *general* Propoſitions are intrinſecally and naturally *good* or *bad*, and are thereby differenc'd from thoſe that are made ſo only by *arbitrary Conſtitution*. Tho yet in one reſpect *theſe* are arbitrary too, in as much as they depend upon ſuch a particular Hypotheſis of the world which was *it ſelf* arbitrary, and which if God ſhould at any time change, the relations of actions to the great end might change too; that which now *naturally* makes *for* the common advantage, might

might *as naturally* make *against* it, and consequently, that which is *now* good might have been *then* evil. But still the two *great Hinges* of Morality stand as fixt and as unvariable as the two *Poles*; whatever is naturally conducive to the common interest is *good*, and whatever has a contrary influence is *evil*. *These* are propositions of eternal and unchangeable verity, and which God can no more cancel or disanull than he can *deny himself*.

14. So that now to *analyze* the immorality of any action into its *last Principles*; If it be enquired why such an action is to be avoided, the *immediat* answer is, because 'tis *sin*: if it be ask'd why 'tis sin, the *immediat* answer is, because 'tis *forbidden*, if why forbidden, because 'twas in it self *fit* to be forbidden, if why fit, because *naturally* apt to *prejudice* the *common* interest: if it be ask'd why the natural aptness of a thing to prejudice the common interest should make it fit to be forbidden, the answer is, because the *common interest* is above all things to be *regarded* and prosecuted: if farther a reason be demanded of this, there can no other be given but because 'tis the *best* and *greatest end*, and consequently, is to be desired and prosecuted not for the sake of any *thing else*, but purely for *it self*.

15. So that now the *last* Law whereof sin is a *Transgression*, is this *great* and *Supream Law* concerning the prosecution of the *common interest*. And every sin is some way or other, di-

rectly or indirectly a tranſgreſſion of this Law. Thoſe againſt any *Moral* Precept, *directly*, and thoſe againſt a Precept merely *Poſitive*, *indirectly*, becauſe 'tis for the common good that the Supreme Authority be acknowledg'd and ſubmitted to, let the *inſtance* wherein Obedience is required, be in *it ſelf* never ſo *indifferent*.

16. If it be now objected that according to theſe meaſures there will be no difference between *Moral* and *Phyſical* evil, contrary to the common diſtinction between *malum Turpe* and *malum Noxium*, the one as oppoſed to *bonum utile*, and the other as oppoſed to *bonum honeſtum*; I anſwer, that I know of no good or evil but of the *end* and of the *means*. Good of the end is what we call *bonum jucundum*, good of the means is what we call *utile*. Evil of the end there is properly none, but that only is evil which is prejudicial to it. Indeed the old maſters of Morality diſcours'd of moral good and evil as of *abſolute natures*, and accordingly, nothing ſo common among them as to talk of *Eſſential Rectitudes*, and *Eſſential Turpitudes*. But I think it greater accuracy to ſay, that Moral good and evil are *Relative* things, that *bonum honeſtum* is one and the ſame with that which is truly *utile*, and that *Malum Turpe* is that which is naturally againſt the profit of the *Community*. And herein I aſſert no more than what the great maſter of the Latin *Philoſophy* and *Eloquence* profeſſedly contends for throughout

out the whole third book of his *Offices*. And therefore instead of evading the Objection, I freely own its charge, and affirm that there is no difference between Moral and Physical evil, any otherwise than that *Physical* evil extends to all things in *nature* which obstruct Happiness, whereas *Moral* evil is appropriated to *Actions* that do so.

SECT. III.

The ſecond part of the Diſcourſe, which briefly treats of Formal ſin, with the requiſites neceſſary to its conſtitution. Where alſo 'tis enquired, whether the Nature of ſin be poſitive or privative.

1. WE are now come to the *ſecond* part of our Diſcourſe, where we are to treat of the nature of *Formal* Sin, that is, of Sin conſider'd not *abſtractedly* for the mere act of Obliquity, but *Concretely* with ſuch a *ſpecial* dependence of it upon the will as ſerves to render the Agent guilty, or obnoxious to puniſhment.

2. And here the firſt thing to be obſerv'd is, that altho *material* ſin does neither in its *notion* nor in its *exiſtence* include *formal* ſin, yet *formal* ſin does always include the other. Tho there may be a tranſgreſſion of the Law without *formal* ſin, yet the latter always ſuppoſes the former, and as St. *John* ſays, *whoſoever committeth ſin, tranſgreſſes alſo the Law.*

John 3. 4.

3. But that which *formal* ſin adds over and above to *material*, and under whoſe reſpect we are now to conſider it, is the *connotation* of that *ſpecial* dependence of it upon the will which derives

derives guilt upon the Agent. So that for a Definition of formal ſin we may ſay, that it is an irregular action, or a tranſgreſſion of the law, ſo depending upon the will, as to make the Agent liable to puniſhment. This is in the Phraſe of St. *John* ἔχειν ἁμαρτίαν to *have* ſin, that is, ſo as to be *accountable* for it, for he ſpeaks of *that* ſin which upon confeſſion God is *faithful and juſt to forgive*, and conſequently not of *material*, (for where there is no *guilt* there can be no *Remiſſion*) but of *formal* ſin. John 1 d.

4. From this *general* notion of *formal* ſin, proceed we to enquire what that *ſpecial dependence* is that makes an irregular action formally a ſin. And here 'tis in the firſt place ſuppoſed, that not *every* dependence of an action upon the will is ſufficient to make it imputable. And with very good reaſon. For otherwiſe the actions of *Infants*, *Fools* and *Madmen* would be *imputable*, for theſe (as indeed all actions) have *ſome* dependence upon the will, at leaſt as a *Phyſical Principle*.

5. To be *poſitive* therefore, that an irregular action may *ſo* depend upon the will as to derive guilt upon the Agent, 'tis neceſſary firſt, that it proceed from the will as from a *free* Principle; Free not only in oppoſition to *coaction* (for ſo *all* the actions of the will are free) but in oppoſition to *neceſſity* or determination to one part of the contradiction. That is in one word, 'tis neceſſary to the imputableneſs

of an action that it be *avoidable*. To this purpose is that common saying of St. *Austin*, *Nemo peccat* (that is *formaliter*) *in eo quod vitare non potest*. And great reason the Father had to say so, for he that cannot avoid transgressing the Law is not so much as capable of being *obliged* by it (because no man can be obliged to what is impossible) and if he be not obliged by it, certainly he cannot Morally and Formally break it. A thing which the Patrons of *Physical Predetermination* would do well to consider.

6. But when I make it necessary to the imputableness of an action that it be freely exerted, I would not be understood of an *immediat* Freeness. For certainly those rooted and confirm'd sinners, who have by long use reduced themselves under a *necessity* of sinning, are never the more *excusable* for the *impotence* they have contracted. If there was *Liberty* in the *Principle* 'tis sufficient.

7. The next requisite, and that which gives the last and finishing stroke to Formal sin is, that it proceeds from the will *sufficiently instructed* by the *understanding*. That is, to make a man sin formally 'tis requisite that he has not only a Power of avoiding that action, which is a transgression of the Law, but that he also *know* it to be a Transgression of the Law, at least that he be in a *capacity* so to do, that so he may be induced to *exert* that *Power*. And 'tis also necessary that he know that he *commits* it, that

is,

is, he must have or at least be in a *capacity* of having, both *notitia Juris* and *notitia Facti*.

8. The former of these depends upon that common Principle that Laws do not oblige till they are *publish'd*, according to that known Maxime of the *Canon Law*, *Leges constituuntur cum promulgantur*, and that of the *Civilians*, *Leges quæ constringunt hominum vitas intelligi ab omnibus debent*. And the latter also depends upon the *equity* of the same Principle, tho somewhat more remotely, for without this the Law, with relation to that *particular* instance, cannot be said to be properly known. For altho I know such a species of action (suppose Adultery) to be a transgression of the Law, yet if I know not that by such a particular instance I *commit* it, I cannot be said to know that *this my action* is a *Transgression* of the *Law*; and consequently (supposing this my ignorance *invincible*) am wholly excusable; as appears in the case of *Abimelech* when he took *Abraham*'s wife. Gen. 20.

9. So that to the Constitution of Formal sin these two things are required, 1st, that the Transgressor have a Power either *immediatly*, or at least in the *Principle* of not doing that action which is a *Transgression*: 2ly, that he either *do* or *may* know that act to be a *Transgression* of the Law, and likewise, that he know when he *commits* it. And thus have I shewn the rise, progress and maturity of sin; I have presented to

view

view both the *imperfect Embryo* and the *full proportion'd* and animated *Monster*. All which I shall briefly comprize in that compendious description of St. *James*, *Lust when it is conceiv'd bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finish'd, bringeth forth death.*

Jam. 1. 15.

10. There is one thing behind relating to the nature of sin in *common*, which I shall briefly consider, and that is, whether its nature be *Positive* or *Privative*. The latter is generally held both by Metaphysitians, Moralists and Divines, but upon what sufficient grounds I could never yet understand. The *Formal* part of sin without all Question is *Positive*, as is plain from the very notion of it. For it denotes only that *special* Dependence which an irregular act has upon the will, which is the same (as well as the common substance of the act) both in *good* and *bad* actions, and consequently *alike Positive*.

11. All the controversy therefore remains concerning the *Material* part of sin, whether that be Positive or Privative. And this too, not with respect to the *mere Act* (for that without question is *positive*) but with respect to the *irregularity* of it.

12. Here then I consider, that according to the foregoing measures the irregularity of an action is not only its aberration *from* the Rule, but its *crossing* or going *contrary* to it. For 'tis not only its *not promoting*, but its *opposing*, or at least its natural aptness to oppose the greatest

and

and beſt of ends. So that 'tis not ſo properly an *irregularity*, as a *contra-regularity*. And therefore good and bad actions are not *privatively* but *contrarily* oppoſed, and conſequently both poſitive, for *contrarys* are always ſo.

13. For as *to be in pain* is not *Privatively* but *contrarily* oppoſed to being *Happy* (for *Pain* is ſomething more than *want of Happineſs*) ſo that *action* which cauſes *Pain* or miſery is not *Privatively* but *contrarily* oppoſed to that which is effective of *Happineſs*, and conſequently is as Poſitive as the other.

14. Thoſe ſins which bid the faireſt for *Privation* are ſins of *Omiſſion*. But even theſe, if we conſider their Nature, will appear to be alſo Poſitive. For to ſpeak properly, their irregularity does not lye in the *not doing* or the *not willing* to do what ought to be done, but in the *willing not* to do it. But *to will* the *not doing* of a thing is as *poſitive* as the willing *to do* it, as being not *contradictorily* or *privatively*, but *contrarily* oppoſed to it. The ſins therefore of *Omiſſion* are as Poſitive as thoſe of *Commiſſion*. The only difference is, that the Poſitiveneſs of ſins of *Commiſſion* lies both in the *Habitude* of the *will*, and in the *executed act* too, whereas the Poſitiveneſs of ſins of *Omiſſion* is in the *Habitude* of the *will only*.

15. And what is here determin'd concerning *Moral evil*, will, I ſuppoſe, hold equally true in *all* evil, except only that which is *Abſolute*, that

is,

is, whoſe evil is not its *noxiouſneſs* to any thing *elſe*, but only the *want* of ſome conſtituent Perfection due to *its ſelf*, according to that diſtinction mention'd by *Suarez* in his Diſputation *de Malo*, of *Malum in ſe* and *malum alteri*. *This* indeed does import no more than a *Privation*. And this I ſuppoſe might be the occaſion of miſtake to thoſe who firſt thought *Moral evil* to conſiſt in a *Privation* only; for *Abſolute* evil does ſo, and they (as I intimated above) took *Moral* evil to be a kind of *abſolute Nature*.

16. Many things I know might be and are commonly objected againſt the *Poſitiveneſs* of ſin, but I can think but of one that's worth conſidering, which is, that if Sin be *poſitive* it will be a *real Entity*, and if ſo, then we are preſs'd with a double abſurdity, 1ſt that God will be the Author of it, as being the efficient cauſe of all *Entity*. 2ly, that it will be *good*, goodneſs being a neceſſary Affection of *Ens*.

17. To this I anſwer, 1ſt that I not only freely *acknowledg*, but *contend* that ſin is a *real Entity*. But then I diſtinguſh of *Entity*. There are *Phyſical*, and there are *Moral* Entitys. By the latter (which alone needs explication) I underſtand certain modes of determination, ſuperadded to Phyſical things or motions by intelligent Beings, in order either to the intereſt or diſintereſt of the univerſe.

18. This being premiſed, I anſwer to the firſt part of the objection by *denying* that it hence

hence follows that God is the Author of ſin. God indeed is the Author of all *Phyſical Beings* and *Motions*, but not of thoſe *modes of determination* ſuperadded by *Intelligent* Beings, which I call *Moral Entitys*. As to the ſecond, I grant the *conſequence*, but deny the *abſurdity* of it. For it is no abſurdity that *Moral evil* ſhould be *Metaphyſically good*. For this Metaphyſical, tranſcendental goodneſs, which is the affection of *Ens*, is nothing elſe but a Being's having that eſſence whereof it is capable, or (as *Suarez* expreſſes it) its having that perfection which is *convenient* to it. But this is very conſiſtent with the nature of *Moral evil*, for this may have what belongs to its *Idea* as well as *good*, and 'tis the *Perfection* of ſin to be *exceeding ſinful*.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Corollarys deduced from the whole. The foulneſs and deformity of ſin repreſented. That it is the greateſt of evils. That no Formal ſin can be in its ſelf Venial. That in all probability Vindicative Juſtice is eſſential to God, hence deduced. A new Hypotheſis for the reconciling of eternal Punishments with the Divine Juſtice. That he who thoroughly underſtands and actually attends to the Nature of ſin cannot poſſibly commit it.

1. HAving thus far carried on the *Theory* of ſin, we may now ſit down, and take an eſtimate of its *Foulneſs and Deformity*. And methinks I am affrighted at the uglineſs of the face which I have *unmask'd*, and am ready to ſtart back from the diſtorted and ill-boding monſter. For however the magic of Self-love may reconcile men to their *own* faults, yet if we ſet the object at a more convenient *diſtance* from the *eye*, and conſider the Nature of ſin *irreſpectively* to our *ſelves*, 'twill certainly appear according to the precedent meaſures, to be the moſt deform'd, monſtrous thing, that can either be *found* or *conceiv'd* in *Nature*.

2. For if we conſider it in its *full latitude*, it is the *higheſt* ἀτοπία or Habitude of the will to the *worſt* of objects; than which what can be ima-

imagin'd more monſtrous and abſurd? If we conſider it as a violation of *Poſitive Law*, what can be more indecorous than for a *Creature* to violate the *commands*, and trample upon the *Authority* of that *awful* excellence to whom he owes his *life*, his *motion* and his very *being*? If we conſider it as a violation of the *Law of Reaſon*, what can be more monſtrous and unnatural than for a man to rebel againſt the *vicarious power of God* in his Soul, to refuſe to live according to *that* part of him whereby he is a *man*, to ſuffer the ſerine and brutiſh part to get the *Aſcendent* over that which is rational and Divine, to refuſe to be govern'd by thoſe ſacred *Digeſts* which are the Tranſcripts of the *Moral Nature of God*, and to act againſt the very *frame* and *contexture* of his *being*. Laſtly, if we conſider it as a Tranſgreſſion againſt that *great and Soveraign Law* of promoting the *common Happineſs*, what a monſtrous evil muſt that be which croſſes and oppoſes the *beſt* of *ends*, and which is alſo propoſed by the *beſt* of *Beings*; that for the intereſt of an inconſiderable part (commonly *ones ſelf*) juſtles the *great wheel* of *Society* out of its proper *track*, that by perſuing a leſſer in prejudice to a greater good, diſturbs the order of things, diſlocates the frame, and *untunes* the *Harmony* of the *univerſe*!

3. We may alſo hence conclude, that ſin is the *greateſt evil* that is, or that can poſſibly be. For it is contrarily oppoſed to the *greateſt poſ-*

ſible

ſible good, and conſequently, muſt needs be the *greateſt evil*. And beſides, 'tis that which in no caſe or juncture whatſoever is to be committed, and therefore muſt be the *greateſt evil*; becauſe otherwiſe it might happen to come into *competition* with a *greater*, and ſo commence *eligible*, which is contrary to the ſuppoſition. Moreover, the greatneſs of this evil above all others is *à poſteriori* further confirm'd from the greatneſs of the *Sacrifice* required for its *attonement*. God *could not*, or at leaſt *thought not fit* to remit it without the ſhedding of blood, and that too of the *blood of God*. So great a *Fool* is he, ſo little does he conſider, that *makes a mock at ſin*.

4. Again it may be hence collected, that no *Formal* ſin can be in its *own nature venial*. For according to the former meaſures every Formal ſin tho never ſo ſmall, is a ſin againſt the *greateſt Charity imaginable*. For 'tis againſt *that Charity* whereby I ought to promote the ends of God, and proſecute the great intereſt of the univerſe. And conſequently, cannot be in its own Nature venial, or pardonable without *Repentance*.

5. Nay may I not further conclude according to the preceding meaſures, that 'tis very *probable* that no ſin could have been pardon'd even *with* Repentance, had there not been alſo *ſatisfaction* made for it, and that *vindicative Juſtice* is *eſſential* to the nature of God? For when

when I conſider ſin, I find it ſo diametrically contrary to the eſſential ſanctity of God, and ſo deſtructive of that great End which he cannot but propoſe, that he muſt needs hate it with an *infinite* hatred. But how he ſhould do ſo, and yet not *puniſh* for it, is hard to underſtand.

6. Upon theſe meaſures we may alſo find out a way of reconciling *eternal puniſhments* with *Divine Juſtice*. The *great Objection* is, what *Proportion* is there between a *tranſient* act of ſin and *eternal* miſery? And if there be none, how is it conſiſtent with divine Juſtice to inflict the one for the other? This has been a great difficulty, and has for a long time ſtood proof againſt all ſolutions. But now if we conſider ſin as *contrarily* oppoſed to the *greateſt poſſible good*, the good of the *univerſe*, and conſequently as the *greateſt poſſible evil*, its demerit will be ſuch that we need not fear 'twill be *over-puniſh'd* even with *eternal* miſery. For if any miſery is to be endured rather than one ſin to be committed, 'tis alſo juſt that any *may* be, when it *is* committed. For the equity of *both* depends upon ſin's being the *greateſt evil*.

7. The laſt Deduction which I ſhall make from the Premiſes is this, that he who *thoroughly underſtands* and *actually attends* to the nature of ſin, cannot poſſibly commit it. For as long as he does ſo, he muſt look upon it as the *greateſt evil*, otherwiſe he cannot be ſaid rightly to

underſtand it. And if he look upon it as the greateſt evil he cannot chuſe it, ſo long as he continues in that judgment, becauſe the then chuſing it would be the chuſing of *all that* whereby it *exceeds* other evils, *gratis*, which is the chuſing of evil *as evil*, which is *impoſſible*.

8. Whoſoever therefore conſents to the commiſſion of ſin paſſes firſt a *wrong judgment* upon it, has the *light of his underſtanding darkned*, and intercepted by a cloud of Paſſion, loſes the *preſent Conviction* of ſin's being the *greateſt evil*, and ſo commits it to avoid (as he then fooliſhly thinks) a *greater*. So that the cauſe and origine of all ſin is *ignorance*, *folly* and *inadvertence*: there is a falſe Propoſition in the *underſtanding* before there is any miſapplication in the *will*, and 'tis through the *ſwimming of the head* that the *feet ſlip* and loſe their ſtation. And yet the ſinner is no way excuſable for this his deception, becauſe 'tis the ignorance of that which he *habitually knows*, and he might have *attended better*, and 'twas his fault that he *did not*.

9. And 'tis the recovering and awaking up into this *Conviction*, that is the *Principle of Repentance* and reformation of life. When a man by the aid of grace and the uſe of due *attention*, reſumes his *interrupted* Judgment of Sins being the *greateſt evil*, he then comes again to himſelf, forms new reſolutions never to commit it, and returns to the *wiſdom of the juſt*. So great reaſon had the Pſalmiſt to pray,

Pſal. 119.

pray, *O grant me underſtanding and I ſhall live,*

THE *PRAYER.*

O My God, who art *pure light* and in whom there is *no darkneſs at all*, who art *pure Love*, and hateſt nothing but *ſin*, and hateſt that *infinitely*, give me an heart after thine own heart, that I may alſo abhor it without *meaſure*, and without *end*. Open thou mine eyes that I may ſee thoſe *two wondrous things of thy Law*, the *Beauty of Holineſs*, and the *deformity of ſin*. Inſpire me with that Charity which *ſeeketh not her own*, that I may ever propoſe and follow that great and excellent end which thou propoſeſt, that I may ever adhere to that which is ſimply and abſolutely beſt, and never for any *ſelf-advantage* diſturb the order of thy *Creation*. O let me never ſo far abuſe thoſe facultys thou haſt given me, as to thwart the deſigns of thy goodneſs and wiſdom, and to interrupt that *Harmony* wherein thou ſo delighteſt. But let all my deſigns be generous, *unſelviſh* and ſincere, ſo as chiefly to rejoyce at the good of thy Creation, at whoſe very *material* Beauty *the*

Morning Stars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy. Holy Father, 'tis thy will that this thy great Family ſhould be proſperous and happy, and the better part of it thy Angels, ſtrictly conform to it; O let *thy will be done here on Earth as it is in Heaven*, and grant that every member of this great Body may ſo ſtudy the good of the whole, that thou may'ſt once more review the works of thy hands, and with a Fatherly complacency pronounce them good. Grant this for the ſake of him who gave his life for the Happineſs of the world, thy Son Jeſus, *Amen.*

II.

GIve me *wiſdom* that ſitteth by thy throne, and reject me not from among thy children. *That* wiſdom which was with thee from the Beginning, which knoweth all thy works and was preſent when thou madeſt the world, and knew what was acceptable in thy ſight and right in thy Commandments. O ſend her out of thy holy Heavens and from the throne of thy glory, that being preſent ſhe may labour with me, that I may know and thoroughly conſider what an evil it is to affront thy Authority, to break through the bounds which thou haſt ſet, to rebel againſt the moſt excellent and divine part of my nature, and to oppoſe that which

which *thou lov'ſt*, and which is of all things the *moſt lovely*. O let thy wiſdom dwell with me, let *my loins be always girt*, and *this my Light always burning*, that I may never be deceiv'd through the *deceitfulneſs of ſin*, nor ſeek death in the *errour of my life*. *Thy words have I hid within my heart that I might not ſin againſt thee, O grant me underſtanding and I ſhall live*. Keep I beſeech thee this conviction ſtill freſh and fully awake in me that Sin is the greateſt of all evils, that ſo the fear of none may ever drive me to do the thing which *thy Soul hates*. *Conſider and hear me O Lord my God, lighten mine eyes that I ſleep not in death*. Amen, Amen.

AN IDEA OF HAPPINESS, IN A *LETTER to a FRIEND*:

ENQUIRING

Wherein the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life does conſiſt.

——— *Sollicitis vitam conſumimus annis,*
Torquemurque metu cæcaque cupidine rerum,
Æterniſque Senes curis dum quærimus ævum,
Perdimus, & nullo votorum fine beati,
Victuros agimus ſemper, nec vivimus unquam.

Manilius lib. 4.

OXFORD,
Printed at the THEATER 1687.

AN IDEA OF HAPPINESS IN A LETTER to a FRIEND.

ENQUIRING

Wherein the greatest Happiness attainable by Man in this Life does consist.

Sollicitis etiam cogitationes omnis
Tarquemur, quo meta cadit, quo tabulam rerum
Æterni, quo sensus curis [illegible]
Perdimus, & nullo [illegible]
Futuros agimus semper, [illegible]

OXFORD,
Printed at the [illegible]

An Idea of Happineſs, &c.

SIR,

1. THO you have been pleas'd to aſſign me the Task of an Angel, and in that Reſpect have warranted me to diſobey you; yet, ſince a conſiderable part of that experimental Knowledg which I have of Happineſs is owing to the Delight, which I take in your vertuous and endearing Friendſhip, I think 'tis but reaſonable I ſhould endeavour to give you an *Idea* of that, whereof you have given me the *Poſſeſſion*.

2. You deſire to know of me wherein the greateſt Happineſs attainable by man in this Life does conſiſt. And here, tho I ſee my ſelf engaged in a work already too difficult for me, yet I find it neceſſary to enlarge it: For, ſince the greateſt Happineſs, or *Summum Bonum* of this Life is a *Species* of Happineſs in general, and ſince it is call'd (Greateſt) not becauſe abſolutely perfect and compleat; but inaſmuch as it comes neareſt to that which indeed is ſo, it will be neceſſary firſt to ſtate the Notion of Happineſs in General, and then to define wherein that Happineſs does conſiſt which is perfect and compleat, before I can proceed to a Reſolution of your Queſtion.

3. By

3. By Happineſs, in the moſt general Senſe of the word, I underſtand nothing elſe but an Enjoyment of any Good. The leaſt Degree of Good has the ſame Proportion to the leaſt Degree of Happineſs as the greateſt has to the greateſt, and conſequently as many ways as a man enjoys any Good, ſo many ways he may be ſaid to be happy: neither will the Mixture of Evil make him forfeit his Right to this Title, unleſs it either *equals* the Good he enjoys, or *exceeds* it: And then indeed it does; but the Reaſon is, becauſe in ſtrictneſs of Speaking, upon the whole Accounnt the man enjoys no Good at all: For if the Good and the Evil be equal-balanc'd, it muſt needs be indifferent to that man either to be or not to be, there being not the leaſt *Grain* of good to determine his Choice: So that he can no more be ſaid to be happy in that Condition, than he could before he was born. And much leſs, if the Evil exceeds the Good: For then he is not only not happy, but abſolutely and purely miſerable: For after an exact Commenſuration ſuppoſed between the Good and the Evil, all that remains over of the Evil is pure and ſimple Miſery; which is the Caſe of the Damn'd: And when 'tis once come to this (whatever ſome Mens *Metaphyſics* may perſwade them) I am very well ſatisfied, that 'tis better not to be than to be. But now on the other ſide, if the Good does never ſo little out-weigh the Evil, that *Overplus* of Good

is

is as pure and unallay'd in its Proportion, as if there were no ſuch Mixture at all; and conſequently the Poſſeſſion of it may properly be call'd Happineſs.

4. I know the Maſters of Moral Philoſophy do not treat of Happineſs in this Latitude; neither is it fit they ſhould: For their Buſineſs being to point out the ultimate End of Human Actions, it would be an impertinent thing for them to give any other *Idea* of *Happineſs* than the higheſt: But however this does not hinder but that the General *Idea* of *Happineſs* may be extended farther, even to the Fruition of any Good whatſoever: Neither is there any reaſon to find Fault with the Latitude of this Notion, ſince we acknowledg Degrees even in Glory.

5. In this General *Idea* of *Happineſs* two things are contain'd. One is, ſome Good, either real or apparent, in the Fruition of which we are ſaid to be in ſome meaſure or other happy. The other is the very Fruition it ſelf. The firſt of theſe is uſually called *Objective Happineſs*, and the latter *Formal*. Some I know divide Happineſs into theſe as diſtinct *Species*; but I think not ſo artificially: For they are both but conſtituent Parts, which joyntly make up one and the ſame Happineſs: Neither of them are ſufficient alone, but they are both equally neceſſary. That the laſt of theſe is a neceſſary Ingredient, I think no doubt can reaſonably be made: For what would the greateſt Good imagin-

imaginable ſignifie without Fruition? And that the former is likewiſe neceſſary is no leſs certain: For how can there be ſuch a thing as Fruition without an Object? I grant 'tis not at all neceſſary that the Object be a real ſubſtantial Good; if it appear ſo, 'tis ſufficient.

6. From this Diſtinction of *real* and *apparent* Good, ſome have taken occaſion to diſtinguiſh of Happineſs likewiſe into two ſorts, *real* and *imaginary*: But I believe, upon a more narrow Scrutiny into the matter, 'twill be found, that all Happineſs, according to its Proportion, is equally *real*; and that that which they term *Imaginary*, too well deſerves the Name, there being no ſuch thing in Nature: For let the Object of it be never ſo *Phantaſtic*, yet it muſt ſtill carry the Semblance and Appearance of Good (otherwiſe it can neither *move* the Appetite nor *pleaſe* it, and conſequently be neither an Object of *Deſire* nor of *Fruition*;) and if ſo, the Happineſs muſt needs be real, becauſe the Formality of the Object, tho 'twere never ſo true and real a good, would notwithſtanding lie in the *Appearance*, not in the *Reality*: Whether it be real or no is purely accidental: For, ſince to be happy can be nothing elſe but to enjoy ſomthing which I deſire, the Object of my Happineſs muſt needs be *enjoy'd* under the ſame Formality as 'tis *deſired*. Now ſince 'tis deſired only as apparently good, it muſt needs pleaſe me when obtained under the ſame Notion. So

that

that it matters not to the Reality of my Happineſs, whether the Object of it be really good, or only apprehended ſo, ſince if it were never ſo *real*, it *pleaſes* only as *apparent*. The Fool has his Paradiſe as well as the Wiſe-man, and for the time is as happy in it; and a kind Deluſion will make a Cloud as pleaſing as the Queen of *Heaven*. And therefore I think it impoſſible for a man to think himſelf happy, and (during that Perſwaſion) not really to be ſo. He enjoys the *Creature* of his own Fancy, worſhips the *Idol* of his Imagination, and the happieſt man upon Earth does no more: For let the Circumſtances of his Life be what they will, 'tis his Opinion only that muſt give the Reliſh. Without this, Heaven it ſelf would afford him no Content, nor the Viſion of God prove *Beatific*. 'Tis true, the man is ſeated at the *Spring-Head* of Happineſs, is ſurrounded with excellent Objects; but alas, it appears not ſo to him; he is not at all affected with his Condition, but, like *Adam*, lies faſt in a dead Sleep in the midſt of Paradiſe.

7. The Sum of this Argument is this; Good is in the ſame manner the Object of *Fruition*, as 'tis of Deſire; and that is not as *really* good in its own Nature, but as 'tis *judged* ſo by the Underſtanding: And conſequently, tho it be only apparent, it muſt needs be as effectual to *gratifie* the Appetite as it was at firſt to *excite* it during that Appearance. So long as it keeps on

on its Vizor and impoſes upon the Underſtanding, what is wanting in the thing, is made up by an *obliging* Impoſture, and *Ignorance* becomes here the Mother of *Happineſs* as well as of *Devotion*: But if the man will *dare* to be wiſe, and too curiouſly examine the ſuperficial Tinſel-Good, he undeceives himſelf to his own Coſt, and, like *Adam*, adventuring to eat of the Tree of *Knowledg*, ſees himſelf naked, and is aſhamed. And for this reaſon I think it impoſſible for any man to love to be flatter'd: 'Tis true, he may delight to hear himſelf commended by thoſe who indeed do flatter him; but the true reaſon of that is, becauſe he does not apprehend that to be Flattery which indeed is ſo; but when he once throughly knows it, 'tis impoſſible he ſhould be any longer delighted with it. I ſhall conclude this Point with this uſeful Reflection, That ſince every Man's Happineſs depends wholly upon his own opinion, the foundatiou upon which all envious men proceed, muſt needs be either *falſe* or very *uncertain*. Falſe, if they think that outward Circumſtances and States of life are all the Ingredients of Happineſs; but uncertain however: For ſince they meaſure the Happineſs of other Men by their own Opinion, 'tis mere Chance if they do not miſplace their Envy, unleſs they were ſure the other 'Perſon was of the like opinion with themſelves. And now what a vain irrational thing is it to diſquiet our ſelves into a diſlike

of

of our own Condition, merely becauſe we miſtake another Man's?

8. Thus far of the Notion of Happineſs in General; I now proceed to conſider that Happineſs which is ὑγιὴς & ὁλόκληρος (as *Plato* ſpeaks) ſound and entire, perfect and compleat. Concerning the general Notion of which, all men, I ſuppoſe, are as much agreed as they are in the *Idea* of a *Triangle*. That 'tis ſuch a State than which a better cannot be conceiv'd: In which there is no Evil you can fear, no Good which you deſire and have not; That which fully and conſtantly ſatisfies the Demand of every Appetite, and leaves no poſſibility for a deſire of Change; or to ſumm it up in that comprehenſive Expreſſion of the Poet,

Quod ſis eſſe velis, nihilque malis.

When you would always be what you are, and (as the Earl of *Roſcommon* very ſignificantly renders it) do *Rather* nothing.

9. This I ſuppoſe is the utmoſt that can be ſaid or conceiv'd of it, and leſs than this will not be enough. And thus far we are all agreed. For I ſuppoſe, the many various Diſputes maintained by Philoſophers concerning Happineſs, could not reſpect this general Notion of it, but only the particular *cauſes* or *means* whereby it might be acquired. And I find *Tully* concurring with me in the ſame Obſervation, *Ea eſt beata vita* (ſays he) *quærimus autem non quæ* lib. 3. de Fin.

ſit,

fit, ſed unde. The difficulty is not to frame a conception of a perfectly happy State in the general, but to define in particular wherein it conſiſts.

10. But before I undertake this Province, I think it might not be amiſs to remove one Prejudice, which, becauſe it has gain'd upon my ſelf ſometimes in my Melancholy Retirements, I am apt to think it may be incident to other men alſo. It is this, Whether after ſo many Diſputes about, ſo many reſtleſs endeavours after this ſtate of perfect Happineſs, there be any ſuch thing or no. Whether it be not a mere *Idea*, as imaginary as *Plato*'s *Common-wealth*, as fictious as the Groves of *Elyſium*. I confeſs, this ſuſpicion has oftentimes *overcaſt* my mind with black thoughts, damp'd my Devotion, and as it were, clipp'd the Wings of my Aſpiring Soul. And I happened to fall into it upon a ſerious reflection on the nature of Fruition in the ſeveral Periods and Circumſtances of my Life. For I obſerv'd according to my *Narrow* experience, that I never had in all my Life the ſame thoughts of any good in the very time of the enjoying it as I had before. I have known when I have promiſed my ſelf vaſt Satisfactions, and my imagination has preſented me at a diſtance with a fair *Landskip* of Delights, yet when I drew nigh to graſp the alluring Happineſs, like the *Senſitive Plant* it contracted it ſelf at the *touch*, and *ſhrink'd* almoſt to nothing in the

the Fruition. And though after the Enjoyment is paſt, it ſeems great again upon *Reflection* as it did before in *Expectation*, yet ſhould a *Platonical Revolution* make the ſame Circumſtances recur, I ſhould not think ſo. I found 'twas ever with me as with the *Traveller*, to whom the Ground which is before him, and that which he has left *behind* him ſeems always more curiouſly embroider'd and delightſome, than that which he *ſtands* upon. So that my Happineſs, like the time wherein I *thought* to enjoy it, was always either *paſt* or to *come*, never *preſent*. Methought I could often lay upon a *Recollection*, How happy *was* I at ſuch a time! Or when I was in *expectation*. How happy *ſhall* I be if I compaſs ſuch a deſign! But ſcarce ever, I *am* ſo. I was pretty well pleas'd methought while I expected, while I hoped, till Fruition jogg'd me out of my pleaſing ſlumber and I knew it was but a Dream. And this ſingle Conſideration has often made me even in the very purſuit after Happineſs, and full career of my Paſſions, to ſtop ſhort on this ſide of Fruition, and to chuſe rather with *Moſes* upon Mount *Nebo* to entertain my fancy with a remote Proſpect of the *Happy Land*, than to go in, and Poſſeſs it, and then *Repine*. How then ſhall Man be happy, when ſetting aſide all the Croſſes of Fortune, he will complain even of *Succeſs*, and *Fruition* it ſelf ſhall *diſappoint* him!

11. And this melancholy reflection bred in me a kind of Suſpicion, that for all that I knew it might be ſo in *Heaven* too. That although at this diſtance I might frame to my ſelf bright *Ideas* of that Region of Bliſs; yet when I came to the Poſſeſſion of it, I ſhould not find that perfect Happineſs there which I expected, but that it would be always to *come* as 'tis now, and that I ſhould ſeek for Heaven even in Heaven it ſelf. That I ſhould not fully acquieſce in my condition there, but at length deſire a Change. And that which confirm'd me the more in this *unhappy Scepticiſm*, was, becauſe I conſider'd that a great number of excellent Beings who enjoyed the very *Quinteſſence* of Bliſs, who were as happy as God and Heaven could make them, grew ſoon uneaſy and weary of their State and *left their own Habitation*. Which argues that their Happineſs was not *perfect* and *compleat*, becauſe otherwiſe they would not have *deſired* a Change, ſince that very deſire is an Imperfection. And if Happineſs be not compleat in Heaven, ſure 'tis impoſſible to be found any where elſe.

12. Before therefore I proceed to define wherein perfect Happineſs does conſiſt, I think it neceſſary to endeavour the removal of this Scruple, which, like the flaming Sword, forbids *entrance* into *Paradice*. In order to which, I ſhall enquire into the *true Reaſon* why theſe Sublunary good things when enjoyed do *neither*

anſwer

anſwer our *expectations*, nor ſatisfy our *Appetites*. Now this muſt *proceed either* from the nature of Fruition it ſelf, or from the Imperfection of it, or from the Object of it, or from our ſelves. I confeſs, did this *defect* proceed from the *very nature* of Fruition (as is ſuppoſed in the Objection) 'tis impoſſible there ſhould be any ſuch thing as *perfect Happineſs*, ſince 'twould *faint* away while *enjoy'd*, and *expire* in our *embraces*. But that it cannot proceed thence, I have this to offer, Becauſe Fruition being nothing elſe but an Application or Union of the Soul to ſome good or agreeable Object, it is impoſſible that ſhould *leſſen* the *good* enjoyed. *Indeed* it may leſſen our *eſtimation* of it, but that is becauſe we do not rightly conſider the nature of things, but promiſe our *ſelves* infinite Satisfactions in the *enjoyment* of finite Objects. We look upon things through a falſe Glaſs, which Magnifies the Object at a diſtance much beyond its juſt Dimenſions. We repreſent our *future enjoyments* to our ſelves in ſuch *favourable* and *partial Ideas* which abſtract from all the *inconveniencies* and allays which will really in the *Event* accompany them. And if we thus over-rate our *Felicities* before-hand, 'tis no wonder if they baulk our *Expectations* in the *Fruition*. But then it muſt be obſerved, that the *Fruition* does not *cauſe* this *Deficiency* in the Object, but only *diſcover* it. We have a better inſight into the Nature of things near at hand,

than when we ſtood afar off, and conſequently diſcern thoſe *defects* and *imperfections*, which, like the qualities of an ill Miſtriſs, lay hid all the time of *Courtſhip*, and now begin to betray themſelves, when 'tis come to *enjoyment*. But this can never happen but where the Object is finite. An infinite Object can never be over-valued, and conſequenty cannot fruſtrate our *Expectations*.

13. And as we are not to charge *Fruition* with our *diſappointments* but our ſelves (becauſe we are acceſſory to our own *deluſion* by taking falſe meaſures of things) ſo neither is the *Unſatisfactorineſs* of any condition to be imputed to the Nature of *Fruition* it ſelf, but either to the *imperfection* of it or to the finiteneſs of the Object. Let the Object be never ſo perfect, yet if the *Fruition* of it be in an imperfect meaſure there will ſtill be room for *Unſatisfactorineſs*, as it appears in our *enjoyment* of God in this Life. Neither can a *finite Object* fully ſatisfy us though we enjoy it never ſo thoroughly. For ſince to a full ſatisfaction and *acquieſcence* of Mind 'tis required that our Faculties be always *entertained* and we ever *enjoying*: it is impoſſible a *finite Object* ſhould afford this Satisfaction, becauſe all the good that is in it (being finite) is at length run over, and then the *enjoyment* is at an end, The flower is ſuck'd dry, and we neceſſarily deſire a Change. Whenever therefore our *enjoyment* proves unſatisfying, we may conclude,

clude, that either the Object is *finite*, or the *Fruition* imperfect. But then how came the *Angels* to be diſſatisfy'd with their Condition in the Regions of *light* and *immortality*, when they drank freely of the *Fountain of Life* proceeding out of the Throne of God, with whom is fulneſs of Joy, and at whoſe Right hand are *Pleaſures for evermore*. Here certainly there is no room either for the *finiteneſs* of the Object, or the *imperfection* of *Fruition*. And therefore their diſſatisfaction can be imputed to no other Cauſe, than the Nature of *Fruition* in general, which is to *leſſen* the good *enjoyed*, as was ſuppoſed in the *Objection*. This I confeſs preſſes hard, and indeed, I have but one way to *extricate* my ſelf from this difficulty, and that is by ſuppoſing a *State* of *Probation* in the *Angels*. That they did not immediatly upon their *Creation* enjoy an *infinite Object*, or if they did, yet that 'twas in an *imperfect meaſure*. For ſhould it be granted that they were at firſt confirmed in Bliſs and *compleatly happy* both in *reſpect* of *Fruition* and *Object*, as we ſuppoſe they are now, I cannot *conceive* it poſſible they ſhould be diſſatisfy'd with their Condition. This being repugnant to the *Idea* of *Perfect Happineſs*. Revel. 16.

14. Since then this diſſatisfaction muſt be derived either from the imperfection of the *Fruition*, or the finiteneſs of the Object, and not from the Nature of Fruition in the general, to infer the poſſibility of perfect *Happineſs*, there

needs no more to be ſuppoſed than the *exiſtence* of a Being full fraught with infinite inexhauſtible good, and that he is able to Communicate to the full. There may be then ſuch a thing as Perfect *Happineſs*. The poſſibility of which may alſo be further *proved* (tho not *explicated*) from thoſe boundleſs Deſires, that *immortal Thirſt* every man has after it by Nature: Concerning which I obſerve, that nothing does more conſtantly, more inſeparably cleave to our Minds than this Deſire of perfect and conſummated Happineſs: This, as *Plato* pathetically expreſſes it, is, πέρας τ πάντων τὸ κάλλιστον, ὁ μάγας ἀγὼν, κ ἐλπὶς ἡ μεγάλη, the moſt excellent end of all our Endeavours, the great Prize, the great Hope. This is the Mark every Man ſhoots at, and tho we miſs our Aim never ſo often, yet we will not, cannot give over; but, like paſſionate Lovers, take *Reſolution* from a *Repulſe*. The reſt of our Paſſions are much at our own Diſpoſal; yield either to Reaſon or Time; we either Argue our ſelves out of them, or at leaſt out-live them. We are not always in Love with Pomp and Grandeur, nor always dazzled with the glittering of Riches; and there is a Seaſon when Pleaſure it ſelf ſhall Court in vain: But the deſire of perfect Happineſs has no Intervals, no Viciſſitudes, it out-laſts the Motion of the Pulſe, and ſurvives the Ruins of the Grave. *Many Waters cannot quench it, neither can the Floods Drown it*: And now certainly God would never

never have planted ſuch an Ardent, ſuch an importunate Appetite in our Souls, and as it were *interwoven* it with our very Natures, had he not been able to ſatisfie it.

15. I come now to ſhew wherein this perfect Happineſs does conſiſt, concerning which, I affirm in the firſt place, that it is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this Life. The greateſt Fruition we have of God here, is imperfect, and conſequently unſatisfactory. And as for all other Objects they are finite, and conſequently, though never ſo fully enjoy'd, cannot afford us perfect Satisfaction. No; *Man knoweth not the price thereof: Neither is it to be found in the Land of the Living. The Depth ſaith, it is not in me, and the Sea ſaith, it is not in me.* Job 28. The Vanity of the Creature has been ſo copiouſly diſcourſed upon, both by Philoſophers and Divines, and is withall ſo obvious to every thinking man's *Experience*, that I need not here take an *Inventory* of the *Creation*, nor turn *Eccleſiaſtes* after *Solomon*. And beſides, I have already anticipated this Argument in what I have ſaid concerning *Fruition*. I ſhall only add one or two Remarks concerning the Objects of *Secular Happineſs*, which are not ſo commonly inſiſted upon, to what has been there ſaid. The firſt is this, that the Objects wherein Men generally ſeek for *Happineſs* here, are not only *finite* in their *Nature*, but alſo *few* in *number*. Indeed, could a Man's Life

be ſo contrived, that he ſhould have a new *Pleaſure* ſtill ready at hand aſſoon as *he* was grown *weary* of the Old, and *every* day *enjoy a Virgin* Delight, he might then perhaps like Mr. *Hobbs* his Notion, and for a while think himſelf happy in this *continued Succeſſion of new Acquiſitions.* But alas, Nature does not treat us with this Variety. The compaſs of our *enjoyments* is much ſhorter than that of our Lives, and there is a *Periodical Circulation* of our *Pleaſures* as well as of our *Blood.*

——*Verſamur ibidem atque inſumus uſque.*
Nec nova vivendo procuditur ulla voluptas.
Lucretius.

The Enjoyments of our Lives run in a perpetual Round like the Months in the *Kalendar*, but with a quicker Revolution; we *dance* like *Fairies* in a *Circle*, and our whole Life is but a nauſeous *Tautology*: We riſe like the Sun, and run the ſame Courſe we did the day before, and to morrow is but the ſame over again: So that the greateſt Favourite of Fortune will have Reaſon often enough to cry out with him in *Seneca*, *Quouſque eadem?* But there is another Grievance which contributes to defeat our Endeavours after perfect Happineſs in the Enjoyments of this Life; Which is, that the Objects wherein we ſeek it, are not only *finite* and *few*; but that they commonly prove occaſions of greater

greater *Sorrow* to us than ever they afforded us *Content*. This may be made out ſeveral ways, as from the Labour of Getting, the Care of Keeping, the fear of Loſing, and the like Topicks, commonly inſiſted on by others; but I wave theſe, and fix upon another Account leſs blown upon, and I think more material than any of the reſt. It is this, that altho the Object loſes that great appearance in the *Fruition* which it had in the *expectation*, yet after it is gone it Reſumes it again. Now we, when we lament the loſs, do not take our meaſures from that appearance which the Object had in the *Enjoyment* (as we ſhould do to make our ſorrow not exceed our *Happineſs*) but from that which it has in the *reflexion*, and conſequently we muſt needs be more *miſerable* in the loſs then we were *happy* in the *enjoyment*.

16. From theſe and the like *Conſiderations*, I think it will evidently appear, that this perfect *Happineſs* is not to be found in any thing we can enjoy in this Life. Wherein then does it conſiſt? I anſwer poſitively, in the full and entire Fruition of God. He (as *Plato* ſpeaks) is τέλος καὶ ἀρχιτελονικὸν τέλος, the Proper and Principal end of Man, the Center of our *Tendency*, the Ark of our *Reſt*. He is the Object which alone can ſatisfy the appetite of the moſt Capacious Soul, and ſtand the *Teſt* of Fruition to Eternity. And to enjoy him fully is perfect Felicity. This in general, is no more than what

is

is deliver'd to us in Scripture, and was believ'd by many of the *Heathen Philoſophers*. But the manner of this Fruition requires a more particular *Conſideration*. Much is ſaid by the Schoolmen upon this Subject, whereof, in the firſt place, I ſhall give a ſhort and methodical account, and then fix upon the Opinion which I beſt approve of. The firſt thing that I obſerve, is, that 'tis generally agreed upon among them, that this Fruition of God conſiſts in ſome *Operation*; and I think with very good Reaſon. For as by the *Objective* part of *perfect Happineſs* we underſtand that which is beſt and laſt, and to which all other things are to be referr'd; So by the *Formal* part of it muſt be underſtood the beſt and laſt Habitude of Man toward that beſt Object, ſo that the *Happineſs* may both ways ſatisfy the Appetite, that is, as 'tis the beſt thing, and as 'tis the Poſſeſſion, Uſe, or Fruition of that beſt thing: Now this habitude whereby the beſt thing is perfectly poſſeſs'd, muſt needs be ſome *Operation*, becauſe *Operation* is the ultimate perfection of every Being. Which *Axiom* (as *Cajetan* well obſerves) muſt not be ſo underſtood as if Operation taken by it ſelf were more perfect than the thing which tends to it, but that every thing with its Operation is more perfect than without it.

17. The next thing which I obſerve, is, that 'tis alſo farther agreed upon among them, that this Operation wherein our Fruition of God does

does consist, is an Operation of the *Intellectual* part, and not of the *Sensitive*. And this also I take to be very reasonable. First, because 'tis generally receiv'd, that the Essence of God cannot be the Object of any of our Senses. But Secondly, Suppose it could, yet since this Operation; wherein our *perfect Happiness* does consist must be the perfectest Operation, and since that of the *Intellectual* part is more perfect than that of the *Sensitive*, it follows that the Operation whereby we enjoy God must be that of the *Intellectual* part only.

18. But now whereas the *Intellectual* part of man (as 'tis opposed to the *Sensitive*) is double, *viz.* That of the *Understanding*, and that of the *Will*, there has commenced a great Controversy between the *Thomists* and the *Scotists*, in which Act or Operation of the *Rational Soul* the *Fruition* of God does consist, whether in an Act of the *Understanding*, or in an Act of the *Will*. The *Thomists* will have it consist purely in an Act of the *Understanding*, which is *Vision*. The *Scotists* in the Act of the *Will*, which is *Love*. I intend not here to launch out into those *Voluminous Intricacies* and *Abstrusities*, occasioned by the management of this Argument: It may suffice to tell you, that I think they are both in the extream, and therefore I shall take the middle way and resolve the perfect Fruition of God partly into *Vision* and partly into *Love*. These are the two arms with which we embrace the Divi-

Divinity, and unite our Souls to the *fair* one and the *good*. These I conceive are both so *essential* to the *perfect Fruition* of God, that the *Idea* of it can by no means be maintained if either of them be wanting. For, *since* God is both Supream *Truth* and infinite *Goodness*, he cannot be entirely possess'd but by the most clear *knowledg* and the most ardent *love*. And besides, since the Soul is happy by her Faculties, her Happiness must consist in the most perfect Operation of each Faculty. For if Happiness did consist formally in the sole Operation of the *Understanding* (as most say) or in the sole Operation of the *Will* (as others) the Man would not be compleatly and in all respects Happy. For how is it possible a Man should be perfectly Happy in loving the greatest good if he did not know it, or in knowing it if he did not love it? And moreover, these two Operations do so mutually tend to the promotion and conservation of one another, that upon this depends the perpetuity and the constancy of our Happiness. For while the Blessed do πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, Face to Face contemplate the Supream Truth and the infinite Goodness, they cannot chuse but love perpetually; and while they perpetually love, they cannot chuse but perpetually contemplate. And in this mutual reciprocation of the Actions of the Soul consists the *perpetuity* of Heaven, the *Circle* of Felicity.

19. Be-

19. Besides this way of resolving our *fruition* of God into *Vision* and *Love*, there is a famous Opinion said to be *broacht* by *Henricus Gandavensis*, who, upon a Supposition that God could not be so fully enjoy'd as is required to perfect Happiness, only by the *Operations* or *Powers* of the Soul, fancied a certain *Illapse* whereby the *Divine Essence* did fall in with, and as it were penetrate the *Essence* of the Blessed. Which Opinion he endeavours to illustrate by this Similitude. That as a piece of Iron, red hot by reason of the *Illapse* of the fire into it, appears all over like fire, so the Souls of the Blessed by this *Illapse* of the *Divine Essence* into them, shall be all over *Divine*.

20. I think he has scarce any *followers* in this Opinion, but I am sure he had a *leader*. For this is no more than what *Plato* taught before him, as is to be seen in his Discourses about the *refusion* of the Souls of good men into the *Anima Mundi*, which is the self-same in other terms with this Opinion. And the Truth of what I affirm may farther appear from an expression of that great *Platonist Plotinus*, (viz.) that *the Soul will then be Happy when it shall depart hence to God, and as another and no longer her self shall become wholly his*, ἑαυτὴν αὐτῷ ὥσπερ κέντρῳ κέντρον συνάψασα, *having joyn'd her self to him as a Center to a Center*. Enn. 6. lib. 9. cap. 10.

21. That such an intimate *Conjunction* with God as is here described is possible, seems to me

me more than credible from the Nature of the *Hypoſtatic* Union, but whether our *Fruition* of God after this Life ſhall conſiſt in it, none know but thoſe happy Souls who enjoy him, and therefore I ſhall determine nothing before the time. This only I obſerve, that ſhould our *Fruition* of God conſiſt in ſuch an Union or rather *Penetration* of *Eſſences*, that would not exclude but rather infer thoſe Operations of *Viſion* and *Love* as neceſſary to *Fruition*; but on the other hand, there ſeems no ſuch neceſſity of this Union to the *Fruition*, but that it may be conceiv'd entire without it. And therefore why we ſhould multiply difficulties without cauſe, I ſee no reaſon. For my part I ſhould think my ſelf ſufficiently happy in the clear Viſion of my Maker, nor ſhould I deſire any thing beyond the Prayer of *Moſes*, *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory.*

Exod. 33. 18.

22. For what an infinite Satisfaction, Happineſs and Delight muſt it needs be to have a clear and intimate perception of that Primitive and Original Beauty, Perfection and Harmony, whereof all that appears fair and excellent either to our *Senſes* or *Underſtandings* in this Life is but a faint imitation, a pale Reflection! To ſee him who is the Fountain of all Being, containing in himſelf the perfection, not only of all that is, but of all that is poſſible to be, *the* Alpha *and* Omega, *the beginning and the ending, the firſt and the laſt, which is, and*

Rev. 1. 8.

and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty! To see him of whom all Nature is the *Image*, of whom all the Harmony both of the visible and invisible World is but the *Eccho!* To see him, who (as *Plato* divinely and magnificently expresses it) is πολὺ πέλαγος καλοῦ καὶ αὐτὸ καθ' αὑτὸ μεθ' αὑτοῦ μονοειδὲς ἀεὶ ὄν. The immense Ocean of Beauty, which is it self by it self, with it self, uniform, always existing! This certainly will affect the Soul with all the pleasing and ravishing Transports of Love and Desire, Joy and Delight, Wonder and Amazement, together with a settled Acquiescence and Complacency of Spirit only less infinite than the *Loveliness* that causes it, and the peculiar Complacency of him who rejoyces in his own fulness, and the *Comprehension* of Eternity. We see how strangely our Sense of *Seeing* is affected with the Harmony of *Colours*, and our sense of Hearing with the Harmony of Sounds, insomuch that some have been too *weak* for the *enjoyment*, and have grown mad with the *Sublimate* of Pleasure. And if so, what then shall we think of the *Beatific Vision*, the pleasure of which will so far transcend that of the other, as God who is all over Harmony and Proportion exceeds the sweetest Melody of Sounds and Colours, and the perception of the Mind is more vigorous, quick and piercing than that of the Senses? This is *perfect Happiness*, this is the Tree of Life which grows in the *midst* of the *Paradise* of God, this is Heaven,

ven, which while the Learned diſpute about, the Good only enjoy. But I ſhall not venture to Soar any longer in theſe Heights, I find the *Æther* too thin here to breath in long, and the Brightneſs of the Region flaſhes too ſtrong upon my tender Senſe; I ſhall therefore haſten to deſcend from the Mount of God, leſt I grow *giddy* with ſpeculation, and loſe thoſe Secrets which I have learnt there, the *Cabala* of Felicity.

23. And now, (Sir) I come to conſider your Queſtion (*viz.*) Wherein the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life does conſiſt. Concerning which, there is as great variety of Opinions among *Philoſophers*, as there is among *Geographers* about the Seat of *Paradiſe*. The Learned *Varro* reckons up no leſs than 288 ſeveral Opinions about it, and yet notwithſtanding the number of Writers who have *bequeath'd* Volumes upon this Subject to Poſterity, they ſeem to have been in the dark in nothing more than in this, and (excepting only a few *Platoniſts*, who placed Man's greateſt End in the Contemplation of Truth) they ſeem to have undertaken nothing ſo *unhappily*, as when they eſſay'd to write of *Happineſs*. Some meaſure their *Happineſs* by the high-tide of their Riches, as the *Egyptians* did the Fertility of the Year by the increaſe of the River *Nile*. Others place it in the Pleaſures of Senſe, others in Honour and Greatneſs. But theſe and the like

were

were Men of the common Herd, low groveling Souls, that either *understood* not the *Dignity* of Human Nature, or else *forgot* that they were Men. But there were others of a *Diviner Genius and Sublimer Spirit*,

Quos melìore luto finxit præcordia Titan.

Who had a more generous blood running in their Veins, which made them put a just value upon themselves, and scorn to place their greatest *Happiness* in that which they should blush to enjoy. And those were the *Stoics* and the *Peripatetics*, who both place the greatest *Happiness* of this Life in the Actions of Vertue, with this only difference, that whereas the former are contented with *Naked Vertue*, the latter require some other *Collateral* things to the farther *accomplishment* of *Happiness*, such as are Health and Strength of Body, a Competent Livelyhood, and the like.

24. And this Opinion has been subscribed to by the hands of eminent *Moralists* in all Ages. And as it is Venerable for its Antiquity, so has it gain'd no small Authority from the Pen of a great Modern Writer (*Descartes*) who resolves the greatest *Happiness* of this Life into the right use of the *Will*, which consists in this, that a Man have a firm and constant purpose always to do that which he shall judge to be best.

25. I confess, the Practice of Vertue is a very

great instrument of *Happiness*, and that there is a great deal more true satisfaction and solid content to be found in a constant course of well living, than in all the soft Caresses of the most *studied* Luxury, or the Voluptuousness of a *Seraglio*. And therefore I have oftentimes been exceedingly pleased in the reading of a certain Passage in that Divine Moralist *Hierocles*, where he tells you, that the Vertuous Man lives much more pleasantly than the Vicious Man. *For* (says he) *all Pleasure is the Companion of Action, it has no Subsistence of its own, but accompanies us in our doing such and such things. Hence 'tis that the worser Actions are accompanied with the meaner Pleasures. So that the good Man does not only excell the wicked Man in what is good, but has also the advantage of him even in Pleasure, for whose sake alone he is wicked. For he that chuses Pleasure with Filthiness, altho for a while he be sweetly and deliciously entertained, yet at last through the Filthiness annexed to his Enjoyment, he is brought to a painful Repentance. But now he that prefers Vertue with all her Labours and Difficulties, though at first for want of use it sits heavy upon him, yet by the Conjunction of good he alleviates the Labour, and at last enjoys pure and unallay'd Pleasure with his Vertue. So that of necessity that Life is most unhappy, which is most wicked, and that most pleasant which is most vertuous.*

26. Now this I readily submit to as a great truth, that the degrees of *Happiness* vary according

cording to the degrees of *Vertue*, and conſequently that that Life which is moſt *Vertuous* is moſt *Happy*, with reference to thoſe that are Vicious or leſs Vertuous, every degree of Vertue having a proportionate degree of *Happineſs* accompanying it, (which is all, I ſuppoſe, that excellent Author intends.) But I do not think the moſt *Vertuous* Life ſo the moſt *Happy*, but that it may become Happier, unleſs ſomthing more be comprehended in the Word (Vertue) then the *Stoics*, *Peripatetics*, and the generality of other Moraliſts underſtand by it. For with them it ſignifies no more but only ſuch a firm ἕξις or habitude of the Will to good, whereby we are conſtantly diſpoſed, notwithſtanding the contrary tendency of our Paſſions, to perform the neceſſary Offices of Life. This they call *Moral* or *Civil* Vertue, and although this brings always *Happineſs* enough with it to make ample amends for all the difficulties which attend the practiſe of it: Yet I am not of Opinion that the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life conſiſts in it. But there is another and a higher Senſe of the Word, which frequently occurs in the *Pythagorean* and *Platonic* Writings, (*viz.*) *Contemplation* and the *Unitive* way of Religion. And this they call *Divine Vertue*. I allow of the diſtinction, but I would not be thought to derive it from the *Principle*, as if Moral Vertue were *acquired*, and this *infuſed* (for to ſpeak ingeniouſly, infuſed

Vertue ſeem'd ever to me as great a *Paradox* in *Divinity*, as Occult qualities in *Philoſophy*) but from the nobleneſs of the Object, the Object of the former being Moral good, and the Object of the latter God himſelf. The former is a State of *Proficiency*, the latter of *Perfection*. The former is a State of difficulty and contention, the latter of eaſe and ſerenity. The former is employ'd in maſtering the Paſſions, and regulating the actions of common Life, the latter in Divine Meditation and the extaſies of *Seraphic* Love. He that has only the former, is like *Moſes* with much difficulty climbing up to the Holy Mount, but he that has the latter, is like the ſame Perſon converſing with God on the ſerene top of it, and ſhining with the Rays of *anticipated* Glory. So that this latter ſuppoſes the acquiſition of the former, and conſequently has all the *Happineſs* retaining to the other, beſides what it adds of its own. This is the laſt *Stage* of *Human Perfection*, the utmoſt *round* of the Ladder whereby we aſcend to *Heaven*, one *Step* higher is Glory. Here then will I build my *Tabernacle*, for *it is good to be here*. Here will I ſet up my Pillar of Reſt, here will I fix, for why ſhould I travel on farther in purſuit of any greater *Happineſs*, ſince Man in this Station is but a *little lower than the Angels*, one *remove* from *Heaven*. Here certainly is the greateſt happineſs, as well as Perfection attainable by Man in this State of imperfection. For ſince that

that Happineſs which is abſolutely perfect and compleat conſiſts in the clear and intimate *Viſion* and moſt ardent *Love* of God, hence we ought to take our Meaſures, and conclude that to be the greateſt Happineſs attainable in this State, which is the greateſt participation of the other. And that can be nothing elſe but the *Unitive* way of Religion, which conſiſts of the *Contemplation* and *Love* of God. I ſhall ſay ſomthing of each of theſe ſeverally, and ſomthing of the *Unitive* way of Religion, which is the reſult of both, and ſo ſhut up this Diſcourſe.

27. By *Contemplation* in general (Θεωρία) we underſtand an application of the *Underſtanding* to ſome truth. But here in this place we take the word in a more peculiar ſenſe, as it ſignifies an habitual, attentive, ſteddy application or converſion of the Spirit to God and his Divine Perfections. Of this the Maſters of *Myſtic Theology* commonly make fifteen Degrees. The firſt is Intuition of Truth, the ſecond is a Retirement of all the Vigour and Strength of the Faculties into the innermoſt parts of the Soul, the third is Spiritual Silence, the fourth is Reſt, the fifth is Union, the ſixth is the Hearing of the ſtill Voice of God, the ſeventh is Spiritual Slumber, the eighth is Ecſtacy, the ninth is Rapture, the tenth is the Corporeal Appearance of Chriſt and the Saints, the eleventh is the Imaginary Appearance of the Same, the

twelfth is the Intellectual Viſion of God, the thirteenth is the Viſion of God in Obſcurity, the fourteenth is an admirable Manifeſtation of God, the fifteenth is a clear and intuitive Viſion of him, ſuch as St. *Auſtin* and *Tho. Aquinas* attribute to St. *Paul*, when he was wrapt up into the third Heaven. Others of them reckon ſeven degrees only, (*viz.*) Taſte, Deſire, Satiety, Ebriety, Security, Tranquility, but the name of the ſeventh (they ſay) is known only to God.

28. I ſhall not ſtand to examine the *Scale* of this Diviſion, perhaps there may be a kind of a *Pythagoric* Superſtition in the number. But this I think I may affirm in general, that the Soul may be *wound* up to a moſt ſtrange degree of *Abſtraction* by a ſilent and ſteddy *Contemplation* of God. *Plato* defines *Contemplation* to be λύσις καὶ χωρισμὸς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπὸ σώματος, a Solution and a Separation of the Soul from the Body. And ſome of the ſeverer *Platoniſts* have been of Opinion, that 'tis poſſible for a Man by mere *intention* of thought not only to withdraw the Soul from all commerce with the Senſes, but even really to ſeparate it from the Body, to *untwiſt* the Ligaments of his Frame, and by degrees to *reſolve* himſelf into the State of the Dead. And thus the *Jews* expreſs the manner of the Death of *Moſes*, calling it *Oſculum Oris Dei, the Kiſs of God's Mouth.* That is, that he breath'd out his Soul by the mere Strength

Strength and Energy of *Contemplation*, and expired in the Embraces of his Maker. A Happy way of Dying! How ambitious ſhould I be of ſuch a conveyance, were it practicable? How paſſionately ſhould I joyn with the Church in the Canticles? *Φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματος αὐτοῦ*, *Let him Kiſs me with the Kiſſes of his Mouth.* Cant. 1. 2.

29. But however this be determin'd, certain it is, that there are exceeding great Meaſures of *Abſtraction* in *Contemplation*, ſo great, that ſomtimes whether a Man be in the Body or out of the Body, he himſel can hardly tell. And conſequently the Soul in theſe *Præludiums* of Death, theſe *Neighbourhoods* of Separation, muſt needs have *brighter* glimpſes, and more *Beatific Ideas* of God, than in a ſtate void of theſe *Elevations*, and conſequently muſt love him with greater Ardency. Which is the next thing I am to conſider.

30. The love of God in general may be conſidered either as it is purely *intellectual*, or as it is a *Paſſion*. The firſt is, when the Soul, upon an apprehenſion of God as a good, delectable, and agreeable Object, joyns her ſelf to him by the Will. The latter is, when the motion of the Will is accompany'd with a ſenſible Commotion of the Spirits, and an eſtuation of the Blood. Some I know are of Opinion, that 'tis not poſſible for a man to be affected with this ſenſitive Love of God, which is a *Paſſion*, be-

cauſe there is nothing in God which falls under our imagination, and *conſequently* (the imagination being the only Medium of conveyance) it cannot be propagated from the Intellectual part to the Senſitive. Whereupon they affirm, that none are capable of this ſenſitive paſſionate Love of God but Chriſtians, who enjoy the *Myſtery* of the *Incarnation*, whereby they know God has condeſcended ſo far as to cloath himſelf with Fleſh, and to become like one of us. But 'tis not all the *Sophiſtry* of the *cold Logicians* that ſhall work me out of the belief of what I feel and know, and rob me of the ſweeteſt entertainment of my Life, the *Paſſionate Love of God*. Whatever ſome Men pretend, who are Strangers to all the affectionate heats of Religion, and therefore make their Philoſophy a Plea for their indevotion, and extinguiſh all Holy Ardours with a *Syllogiſm*; yet I am firmly perſuaded, that our love of God may be not only paſſionate, but even *Wonderfully* ſo, and *exceeding the Love of Women*. 'Tis an *Experimental* and therefore *undeniable* Truth, that *Paſſion* is a great Inſtrument of *Devotion*, and accordingly we find, that Men of the moſt warm and pathetick *Tempers* and *Amorous Complexions* (Provided they have but Conſideration enough withall to fix upon the right *Object*) prove the greateſt *Votaries* in *Religion*. And upon this account it is, that to heighten our Love of God in our Religious *Addreſſes*, we endeavour

deavour to *extite* our Paſſions by *Muſic*, which would be to as little purpoſe as the *Fanatic* thinks 'tis, if there were not ſuch a thing as the *Paſſionate Love of God*. But then as to the *Objection*, I *Anſwer* with the excellent *Deſcartes*, that although in God who is the *Object* of our *Love*, we can *imagine* nothing, yet we can *imagine* that our Love, which conſiſts in this, that we would unite our *ſelves* to the *Object* beloved, and conſider our *ſelves* as it were a part of it, And the ſole *Idea* of this very Conjunction is enough to ſtir up a heat about the Heart, and ſo kindle a very *vehement Paſſion*. To which I add, that although the *Beauty* or *Amiableneſs* of God be not the ſame with that which we ſee in *Corporeal Beings*, and *conſequently* cannot *directly* fall within the *Sphere* of the imagination, yet it is ſomthing *Analogous* to it, and that very *Analogy* is enough to *excite* a *Paſſion*. And this I think ſufficient to warrant my general diviſion of the Love of God into *Intellectual* and *Senſitive*.

31. But there is a more *peculiar Acceptation* of the *Love* of God proper to this place. And it is that which we call *Seraphic*. By which I underſtand in ſhort, that Love of God which is the *effect* of an intenſe *Contemplation* of him. This differs not from the other in kind, but only in *degree*, and that it does *exceedingly*, in as much as the thoughtful *Contemplative* Man (as I hinted before) has *clearer Perceptions* and *livelier*

lier Impreſſions of the *Divine Beauty*, the lovely *Attributes* and *Perfection* of God, than he whoſe Soul is more deeply *ſet* in the *Fleſh*, and lies groveling in the *bottom* of the *Dungeon*.

32. That the nature of this *Seraphic Love* may be the better underſtood, I ſhall conſider how many *degrees there* may be in the *Love* of God. And I think the Computation of *Bellarmin*, *lib. 2. de monachis*, *cap. 2.* is *accurate* enough. He makes four. The firſt is to *love* God proportionably to *his Lovelineſs*, that is, with an *infinite Love*; and this *degree* is peculiar to God himſelf. The ſecond is to Love him, not proportionably to his *Lovelineſs*, but to the utmoſt Capacity of a *Creature*, and this *degree* is peculiar to Saints and Angels in *Heaven*. The third is to love him not proportionably to his *Lovelineſs*, nor to the utmoſt capacity of a *Creature*, abſolutely conſider'd; but to the utmoſt capacity of a *Mortal Creature* in this Life. And this (he ſays) is proper to the *Religious*. The fourth is to love him not proportionably to his *Lovelineſs*, nor to the utmoſt capacity of a *Creature*, conſider'd either abſolutel or with reſpect to this *Life*, but only ſo as to love nothing equally with him or above him. That is, not to do any thing contrary to the *Divine Love*. And this is abſolute indiſpenſable duty, leſs than which will not qualify us for the *enjoyment* of God hereafter.

33. Now

33. Now this *Seraphic Love* which we here diſcourſe of is in the third degree: When a Man, after many *degrees* of *Abſtraction* from the *Animal* Life, many a profound and ſteddy Meditation upon the *Excellencies* of God, ſees ſuch a vaſt *Ocean* of *Beauty* and *Perfection* in him, that he loves him to the utmoſt *ſtretch* of his Power; *When he ſits under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit is ſweet to his Taſt.* Cant. 2. 3. When he *Conſecrates* and *Devotes* himſelf wholly to him, and has no Paſſion for Inferiour *Objects.* When he is raviſhed with the *delights* of his *Service*, and breaths out ſome of his Soul to him in every Prayer. When he is delighted with *Anthems* of Praiſe and Adoration more than with *Marrow and Fatneſs*, and *Feaſts* upon *Alleluiah.* When he melts in a *Calenture of Devotion*, and his *Soul breaketh out with fervent Deſire*, Pſal. 119. When the one thing he *delights* in is to converſe with God in the *Beauty* of *Holineſs*, and the one thing he *deſires to ſee him as he is in* Heaven. This is *Seraphic* Love, and this with *Contemplation* makes up that which the *Myſtic* Divines ſtile the *Unitive* way of Religion: It is called ſo becauſe it Unites us to God in the moſt *excellent manner* that we are capable of in this Life. By Union here I do not underſtand that which is *local* or *preſential*, becauſe I conſider God as *Omnipreſent.* Neither do I mean a Union of Grace (as they call it) whereby we are *reconciled* to God,

God, or a Union of Charity, whereof it is ſaid, *he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God and God in him*, Jo. 4. 16. The firſt of theſe being as common to the inanimate things as to the moſt *Extaſi'd* Soul upon Earth. And the two laſt being common to all good men, who indeed love God, but yet want the *excellency* of *Contemplation* and the *Myſtic* Union. The Union then which I here ſpeak of, is that which is between the *Faculty* and *the Object*. Which conſiſts in ſome Habitude or Operation of one toward the *other*. The *Faculties here* are the *Underſtanding* and *Will*, *the Object* God, and the *Operations Contemplation* and *Love*. The reſult of *which* two is the *Myſtic Union*. Which, according to this *complex* Notion of it that I *have here* delivered, is thus moſt admirably repreſented by the excellent Biſhop *Taylour*. *It is* (ſays he) *a Prayer of quietneſs and ſilence, and a Meditation extraordinary, a Diſcourſe without variety, a Viſion and Intuition of Divine Excellencies, an immediat entry into an Orb of light, and a reſolulution of all our Faculties into Sweetneſs, Affections, and Starings upon the Divine Beauty. And is carried on to Extaſies, Raptures, Suſpenſions, Elevations, Abſtractions and Apprehenſions beatifical.*

The Great Exemplar, pag. 60.

34. I make no doubt but that many an honeſt Pious Soul arrives to the heavenly *Canaan*, who is not fed with this *Manna* in the *Wilderneſs*,

neſs. But though every one muſt not expect theſe *Antepaſts* of Felicity that is vertuous, yet none elſe muſt. *Paradiſe* was never open but to a State of *Innocence.* But neither is that enough. No, this Mount of God's Preſence is fenced not only from the *profane*, but alſo from the *moderately* vertuous. 'Tis the Priviledge of Angelical Diſpoſitions, and the Reward of *eminent* Piety and an excellent Religion, to be admitted to theſe *Divine Repaſts*, theſe Feaſts of *love.* And here I place the greateſt Happineſs attainable by Man in this Life, as being the neareſt Approach to the State of the Bleſſed above, the *outer Court* of Heaven.

35. Theſe (Sir) are my thoughts concerning Happineſs. I might have *ſpun* them out into a greater length, but I think a little Plot of ground *thick-ſown* is better than a great Field which for the moſt part of it lies Fallow. I have endeavour'd to deliver my Notions with as much Perſpicuity and in as good Method as I could, and ſo to anſwer all the ends of *Copiouſneſs*, with the advantage of a ſhorter Cut. If I appear ſingular in any of my Notions, 'tis not out of an induſtrious affectation of Novelty, but becauſe in the compoſing of this diſcourſe (the Meditation of a few broken hours in a Garden) I conſulted more my own experimental Notices of things and private *Reflections* than the Writings of others. So

that

that if ſomtimes I happen to be in the Road, and ſomtimes in a way by my ſelf, 'tis no wonder. I affect neither the one nor the other, but write as I think. Which as I do at other times, ſo more eſpecially when I ſubſcribe my ſelf

SIR,

Yours moſt affectionately,

All-Souls College
Apr. 18. 1683.

J. N.

A Let-

A Letter of Reſolution concerning ſome Paſſages in the foregoing Treatiſe, to the ſame Perſon.

SIR,

1. THE kind Entertainment which you gave my *Idea of Happineſs*, does not only *incourage*, but *oblige* me to endeavour the ſatisfaction of that Scruple, which the Peruſal of it has occaſion'd. I cannot but highly commend your *ſearching* Curioſity, in deſiring farther ſatisfaction concerning a matter of ſo ſublime and excellent a Nature (for the Tree of Paradiſe is *good for food, pleaſant to the Eye, and a Tree to be deſired to make one wiſe*) tho you muſt give me leave to wonder that you would not *enquire* at a better *Oracle*. But ſince you are *pleas'd* to be of the Opinion, that few have made this Subject ſo *familiar* to their Meditation as I have, I cannot with any pretence decline your Requeſt, tho perhaps by my performing it I ſhall work you into a contrary perſuaſion.

2. Sir, You ſay you ſhould like my Notion concerning the *Reality* of that which is uſually call'd

call'd *Imaginary Happineſs*, that is, (as you well explain both your own and my meaning) that although the *Object* may be an *Imaginary Good*, yet the *Happineſs* which conſiſts in the Fruition of that Object, will not be *Imaginary too*, but *real*, and conſequently, that 'tis impoſſible for a man to *ſeem* to himſelf to be happy, and not to *be really* ſo, all Happineſs conſiſting in *Opinion*. This Notion, you ſay, you ſhould like rarely well, could you free your ſelf from one difficulty which it engages you upon; (*viz.*) That hereafter, in the ſtate of Glory, either one Saint ſhall think himſelf as happy as another, or not; if not, this muſt needs occaſion Envy or Diſcontent, but if one ſhall think himſelf as happy as another, then, according to my *Hypotheſis*, that *Opinion* is the *Meaſure of Happineſs*, 'twill follow that he will really be ſo; and this brings in *Equality* of Happineſs, which you look upon (and I think juſtly too) as another abſurdity.

3. I confeſs, Sir, this Argument is pretty ſubtle and ſurprizing, but I conceive the Knots of it may be untied by this Anſwer. Firſt, it may be juſtly queſtion'd, whether the firſt part of your *Dilemma* be neceſſarily attended with the appendant abſurdity. 'Tis true indeed, not to think ones ſelf as happy as another, is the Spring of Envy or Diſcontent among Men in this World, but whether this be the *genuin* and *conſtant* effect of that Conſideration, or whether it ought

ought not rather to be aſcribed to the preſent Infirmities and Imperfections of Human Nature, may admit Diſpute. But in caſe this abſurdity does inſeparably cleave to the firſt part, then I betake my ſelf to the latter, and affirm, that in Heaven one Saint ſhall think himſelf as happy as another. Then, according to my own Notion (*ſay you*) it will follow that he *is really* ſo. No, I deny the conſequence, the invalidity of which will plainly appear by diſtinguiſhing the ambiguity of the *Phraſe*. For this Expreſſion, *One Saint thinks himſelf as happy as another*, may be taken in a double ſenſe, either that he thinks himſelf as happy as he himſelf thinks that other, or that he thinks himſelf as happy as that other thinks himſelf. I grant, ſhould one Saint think himſelf as happy as another in this latter ſenſe of the Phraſe, he would, according to my *Hypotheſis*, really be ſo; ſo that this would bring in equality. And therefore in this Senſe I deny the Propoſition, and that without the leaſt danger of ſplitting upon the firſt abſurdity. But for the former Senſe, *that* has no ſuch *levelling* quality, for to ſay that I think my ſelf as happy as I think another, amounts to no more than this, that in my apprehenſion another does not exceed me in Happineſs: but tho he does not in *my apprehenſion*, yet he may in *reality*, for tho my Opinion gives meaſures to my *own* Happineſs, yet it does not to *another* Mans. So that one Saint may be

ſaid to think himſelf as happy as another in the former ſenſe, without equalling the Happineſs of the Bleſſed, tho, I confeſs, I ſhould much rather adhere to the contrary propoſition, (*viz.*) that *one ſhall not think himſelf as happy as another*, in caſe ſuch an Opinion be not neceſſarily attended with *Envy* or *Diſcontent*. Becauſe it ſeems unreaſonable to make them ignorant of the degrees of one another's Bliſs, unleſs that ignorance be neceſſarily required to prevent the alledg'd abſurdities. But I *determin* nothing in this point, my buſineſs was only to break the force of your *Dilemma*, and to ſhew that my Notion does not involve you in the difficulty ſuppoſed. This, Sir, is all that I think neceſſary to ſay to a Perſon of your apprehenſion, and therefore I end theſe nice Speculations with this profitable reflection, that altho the *Notion* of Happineſs be *intricate* and *obſcure*, yet the *means* of attaining it are *plain*, and therefore 'twould be moſt adviſable both for you and me *chiefly* to apply our ſelves to the *latter here*, and we ſhall underſtand the *former* with the beſt ſort of Knowledge, that of *Experience*, *hereafter*.

Yours

J. N.

Anſ.

Another Letter to the ſame Perſon, concerning the true Notion of Plato's Ideas, *and of* Platonic Love.

Tanta vis in Ideis conſtituitur, ut niſi his intellectis, ſapiens eſſe nemo poſſit.
Auguſtinus Tom. 4. Pag. 548. Q. 46.

SIR,

1. WERE I not as well acquainted with your ſingular *modeſty*, as I am with your *intellectual* accompliſhments, I ſhould readily conclude, that your directing your enquiries to *me* proceeded not ſo much from a Curioſity to *improve* your *own* Knowledge, as to *try mine*. But when I conſider that you are ignorant of nothing ſo much as of your own Worth and Abilities, I begin to think it poſſible that you may propoſe theſe *Queſtions* even to *me* out of a deſire to be *inform'd*. Which way ſoever it is, I acknowledge my ſelf to be obliged to you for affording me an opportunity of ſerving you, eſpecially in ſuch an Inſtance, where I cannot gratify your Requeſt without

humouring my own *Genius* at the ſame time. For indeed to my apprehenſion, there is not a finer or more Sublime piece of Speculation in all *Plato*'s *Philoſophy*, than that of his *Ideas*, and that of his *Love*, tho it has undergone the ſame hard Fate with many other excellent *Theories*, firſt, to be either *ignorantly miſunderſtood*, or *malicioufly miſrepreſented*, and then *popularly* vilify'd and decry'd.

2. To do right therefore to the name of this great Man, as well as to ſatisfy your Demands, I ſhall firſt *propoſe* the general miſtake, and then *rectify* it, firſt preſent you with the *ſuppos'd* Opinion of *Plato*, and then with the *true* and *genuin* one. I begin with his *Ideas*, by which 'tis taken for granted by the *generality* of Writers, eſpecially thoſe of the *Peripatetic Order*, that he underſtood *univerſal* Natures or abſtract Eſſences ſubſiſting eternally by themſelves, Separate both from the mind of God and all ſingular Beings, according to which, as ſo many *patterns*, all Singulars are form'd. As for inſtance, that a Man, not this or that *in* particular, but a *univerſal* Man, or a Man in general, ſhould exiſt by it ſelf eternally, according to which all particular Men were made. Sir, I ſupppoſe you can hardly forbear ſmiling at the odneſs of the Conceit, but as ridiculous as you may think it, 'tis ſaid to be maintained by no leſs a Man than *Plato*, and has been thought of that *moment* too, that *Multitudes* of

great

great Men have ſet themſelves very *ſeriouſly* to confute it as a dangerous Hereſy, and have oppoſed it with as much *zeal* as ever St. *Auſtin* did the *Manichees* or the *Pelagians*.

3. But now, that this Opinion was not only for its Abſurdity and Contradictiouſneſs unworthy of the contemplative and refin'd Spirit of *Plato*; but was alſo apparently none of his, I dare ſay any capable Perſon will be convinc'd that ſhall heedfully and impartially *examine* and *compare* the Works of *Plato*; And this *Ariſtotle* himſelf muſt needs have known (he having been his conſtant Auditour for twenty years together) but only he wanted a Shadow to fight with, and ſo father'd this monſtrous Opinion upon his Maſter. And of this diſingenuity of *Ariſtotle*, together with other abuſes, *Plato* himſelf complain'd, while alive, in theſe words; Αριστοτέλης ἡμᾶς ἀπελάκτισε καθαπερεὶ τὰ πωλάρια γενηθέντα τὴν μητέρα, as is recorded by *Laertius* in the Life of *Ariſtotle*.

4. And now, that the groſſneſs of this Abuſe may the more fully appear, I will in the next place preſent you with another Senſe of *Plato*'s *Ideas*, and ſuch as by a more than ordinary acquaintance with his Works, I know to be the *true* and *genuin* one. Know then that *Plato* conſidering the World as an effect of an *intellectual* Agent, and that in the Operations of all other *Artificers* or rational *Efficients* there muſt be ſome form in the Mind of the *Artificer* pre-

ſuppoſed to the VVork (for otherwiſe what difference will there be between a *fortuitous* effect and an *intended* one, and how comes the effect to be of *this* Species rather than *another*?) thought it neceſſary to ſuppoſe ἀϊδια παραδείγματα, Eternal Forms, Models or Patterns, of all the Species of being in Nature exiſting in the Mind of God. And theſe he calls *Ideas*. I ſay exiſting in the Mind of God, for there is not the leaſt Intimation in all *Plato*'s VVorks of any ſuch *Ideas* exiſting *ſeparately* from the Divine intellect, nor do the great Maſters of *Platonic Philoſophy*, *Plotinus*, *Porphyrius*, *Proclus*, or any other that I know of make mention of any ſuch *Spectres* and *Ghoſts* of Entity. No, this Monſter was hatch'd in *Ariſtotle*'s Brain, and I believe did never enter *Plato*'s Head ſo much as in a Dream. For he is not only ſilent about it, but does in ſeveral places expreſly aſſert the contrary; Particularly in his *Timæus*, where, of ſet purpoſe, he deſcribes the *Origin* of the VVorld, he ſays that God made the VVorld according to that Pattern or *Idea* which he had in his Mind. The ſame you will find more amply confirm'd in his *Hippias*, his *Parmenides*, and his ſixth Book of *Repub.* and many other places. And theſe *Ideas* he calls τὰ πρῶτα νοητὰ, *the firſt Intelligibles*, and τὰ ὄντων μέτρα, *the Meaſures of the things that are*, implying, that as all things were form'd according to theſe *ſpecifical* Platforms; ſo their truth muſt be meaſured from

from their Conformity to them. And in this Senſe muſt be taken that Common Axiom of the Schools, that *the Truth of a thing is its Conformity with the Divine Intellect*, for it is in no other Senſe Intelligible, as you will diſcern in the Proceſs.

5. But now, leſt you ſhould imagine, that this *Platonic Hypotheſis* of *Ideas* exiſting in the Divine Mind ſhould ill comport with the Simplicity of God, or claſh with that approved Doctrine of the Schools, *Nihil eſt in Deo quod non ſit Deus*, (which is another cavil of the *Antiplatoniſts*) you are to underſtand that *Plato* by his *Ideas* does not mean any *real* Eſſence *diſtinct* from the Divine Eſſence, but only the Divine Eſſence it ſelf with this *Connotation*, as it is variouſly imitable or participable by created Beings, and conſequently, according to the *multifariouſneſs* of this imitability, ſo are the *poſſibilities* of Being. Which is as fine a Notion as was ever framed by the Mind of Man, and that it is his, you will find, if you conſult his *Parmenides*. And this will ſerve to help us out with another difficulty, for whereas *Plato* makes his *Divine Ideas* not only the *exemplary* cauſes of things, but alſo (which is a conſequent to the former) the meaſure of their Truth, this may ſeem to fall in with their Opinion who make all *Truth* dependent upon the Speculative underſtanding of God, that is, that God does not underſtand a thing ſo becauſe it is ſo in its own

Nature, but that a thing is therefore ſo becauſe God is *pleas'd* ſo to underſtand it. Which is an Opinion full of miſchief and abſurdity, as you may ſee compendiouſly, and yet evidently demonſtrated, in Dr. *Ruſ*'s little *Diſcourſe* of *Truth*. Now for the clearing this Difficulty, 'tis to be obſerved, that the Eſſence of God, according to *Plato*, is diſtinguiſhed into νὸς νοερὸς and νὸς νοητὸς, the *Counterpart* whereof in Engliſh is *Conceptive* and *Exhibitive*. By the Mind of God *Exhibitive* is meant the Eſſence of God as thus or thus imitable or participable by any Creature, and this is the ſame with an *Idea*. By the Mind of God *Conceptive* is meant a reflex act of God's Underſtanding upon his own Eſſence as *Exhibitive*, or as thus and thus imitable. Now if you conſider the Divine Underſtanding as *Conceptive* or *Speculative*, it does not *make* its Object but ſuppoſe it, (as all *Speculative* Underſtanding does) neither is the Truth of the Object to be meaſured from its Conformity with *that*, but the Truth of *that* from its Conformity with its Object. But if you conſider the Divine Underſtanding as *Exhibitive*, then its Truth does not depend upon its Conformity with the Nature of things, but on the contrary, the Truth of the Nature of things depends upon its Conformity with it. For the Divine Eſſence is not thus or thus imitable, becauſe ſuch and ſuch things are in being, but ſuch and ſuch things are in being, becauſe the Divine

Divine Eſſence is thus and thus imitable, for had not the Divine Eſſence been thus imitable, ſuch and ſuch Beings would not have been *poſſible*. And thus is *Plato* to be underſtood when he founds the Truth of things upon their Conformity with the *Divine Ideas*, and thus muſt the Schools mean too by that forementiond *Axiom* concerning *Tranſcendental Truth*, if they will ſpeak Senſe, as I noted above.

6. And now, Sir, from *Plato*'s Ideas thus *amiably* ſet forth, the *Tranſition* methinks is very natural to *Love*. And concerning this I ſhall account in the ſame Method, firſt, by pointing out the popular Miſapprehenſions about it, and then by exhibiting a true Notion of it. *Platonic Love* is a thing in every bodies Mouth, but I find ſcarce any that think or ſpeak accurately of it. The miſtakes which I obſerve are chiefly theſe. Some of the groſſer Underſtanders ſuppoſe that *Plato* by his *Love* meant παιδεραστία, the *Love* of *Males*, but the Occaſion of this Conceit was from a paſſage in his *Convivium*, where he brings in *Ariſtophanes* ſpeaking favourably that way. But he that ſhall from hence conclude *Plato* a *proſtitute* to that vile Paſſion, may as well conclude a *Dramatic* Poet to be an *Atheiſt* or a *Whore-maſter*, becauſe he repreſents thoſe of that Character. But that Divine *Plato* intended nothing leſs than to countenance any ſuch thing, is evident from the whole ſcope and purport of that *Dialogue*, and from other

places

places where he expreſly condemns it, and rejects it with great abhorrence; particularly in the firſt of his *de legibus*, where he calls it τὸ παρὰ φύσιν τόλμημα, *an unnatural attempt*. Others by *Platonic Love* underſtand the Love of *Souls*, and this indeed has ſomthing of truth in it, only it is much too narrow and particular.

7. Others take *Platonic Love* to be a deſire of imprinting any excellency, whether moral or intellectual, in the Minds of beautiful young men by Inſtruction, and ſo likewiſe of enjoying your own Perfections reflected from the Mind of another, mix'd *with* and recommended *by* the Beauty of the Body. According to the uſual ſaying, *Gratior è Pulchro, &c.* And thus *Socrates* was ſaid to love his beautiful Pupils *Phædrus* and *Alcibiades*. Others meaſure the Nature of *Platonic Love*, not from the *Object* (to which they ſuppoſe it indifferent) but from the *manner* of the *Act*. And according to theſe, that man is ſaid to love *Platonically*, that does *Caſſo delectamine amare*, love at a diſtance, that never deſigns a *cloſe* fruition of the Object what ever it be, whether Senſual or Intellectual, but chooſes to dwell in the *Suburbs*, pleaſing himſelf with remote Proſpects, and makes a *Miſtreſs* of his own *Deſire*. And this is the receiv'd Notion, and that which People generally mean when they talk of *Platonic Love*. But this too is far enough from the right, for tho *Platonic Love* does not aim at the

the fruition of ſenſual Objects, yet it deſigns the fruition of its own Object as much as any other Love does. That therefore which diſtinguiſhes *Platonic Love*, is not the *manner* of the act above-mention'd, but the peculiarity of the *Object*. And what that is muſt be collected from the Deſign of *Plato* in that *Dialogue*, where he treats purpoſely of it, his *Convivium*. Which is briefly to ſhew the manner of the Souls aſcent to God by love. For *Plato* makes the Happineſs of Man to conſiſt in the Contemplation and Love of God, whom he calls the *Idea* of *Beauty*. But now becauſe this *Idea* of *Beauty* (God) is of too ſublime and refined excellency to be immediatly faſtned upon by our Love, he recommends to us μέθοδον ἀνόδου, *a Method of Aſcent*, which is from loving the Beauty we ſee in Bodies, to paſs on to the Love of the Beauty of the Soul, from the Beauty of the Soul to the Beauty of Vertue, and laſtly from the Beauty of Vertue, ὅτι τὸ πολὺ πέλαγος τοῦ καλοῦ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀγαθὸν τὸ ἐρασὸν καὶ ἰφνὲν, to the immenſe *Ocean of Beauty*, &c. For ſo have I obſerv'd a tender Infants Eye not enduring to gaze directly upon the too powerful Excellence of the *Meridian* Sun, chuſe to entertain it ſelf with the abatements of corrected and reflected Light, and take up with the *feebler* refreſhments of leſſer Beauties for a while, till at length the faculty grows more confirm'd,

firm'd, and dares encounter the Sun in his Strength. And these are the *Steps* of the *Sanctuary*. So that *Platonic Love* is the Love of Beauty abstracted from all sensual Applications, and desire of corporal contract, as it leads us on to the Love of the first original Beauty, God; or more plainly thus, The Ascent of the Soul to the Love of the *Divine* Beauty, by the Love of *abstracted* Beauty in Bodies. This Love of abstracted Beauty in Bodies he calls Ἔρως οὐρανίος, *Celestial Love*, in opposition to that which he calls ἐπιθυμία, which is the same with that Passion commonly signify'd by the name of Love, (*viz.*) a desire of corporal contact arising from the sight of Beauty. This last indeed is a very vile, brutish, unmanly affection, and such as considering the vileness of our Bodies, one would think a man could never be charm'd into without the *Magic* of a *Love-potion*. But the former is an Angelical Affection, for certainly Beauty is a Divine thing; It is (as the *Platonic* Author says of Wisdom) *the pure Influence flowing from the Glory of the Almighty, and the Brightness of the Everlasting Light:* or in *Plato*'s own Words, *A Ray of God*. And therefore the Love of abstract Beauty must needs be a very generous and divine Affection. Sir, I could be more large in my account, but I consider *what* 'tis I write, and to *whom*, and therefore

fore I think it high time to remit you to your own Thoughts, ſome of which I hope will be, that *I am in a very* eminent degree of Friendſhip,

Yours

J. Norris.

A Let-

A Letter concerning Love and Muſic.

SIR,

TO the firſt of your Enquiries concerning the true Idea of *Love*, and particularly that between Man and Woman, and wherein it ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from *Luſt*, my Anſwer in ſhort is this. That Love may be conſider'd either barely as a *Tendency* toward *good*, or as a *willing* this good to ſomthing capable of it. If Love be taken in the firſt Senſe 'tis what we call *Deſire*, if in the ſecond, 'tis what we call *Charity* or *Benevolence*.

2. Then as to *Deſire*, there is either an Intellectual or a ſenſual deſire, which denomination is not here taken from the *Faculty*, but from the *Quality* of the *Object*. That I call here an Intellectual Deſire whoſe object is an *Intellectual* good, and that a ſenſual deſire whoſe object is a *ſenſual* good. And this is that which *Plato* meant by his two Cupids. The latter of theſe is what we call *Luſt*.

3. But then this again ſignifies either abſtractly and indifferently (*viz.*) a bare deſire of Corporeal pleaſure, or elſe concretely and immorally (*viz.*) a deſire or longing after corporeal pleaſure in forbidden and unlawful inſtances.

4. Theſe

4. Theſe things being thus briefly premiſed my next Reſolution is this. That the *Ordinary* Paſſion of Love, that which we mean when we ſay ſuch a man or ſuch a woman is in *Love*, is no other than plain *Luſt*, if Luſt be taken according to the firſt ſignification, namely, for a ſenſual Deſire, or a Tendency toward a ſenſual good. But if Luſt be taken in the latter ſenſe, as a Tendency to corporeal pleaſure in unlawful inſtances, that which our Saviour meant when he ſaid *He that looks upon a woman to luſt after her*, &c. then 'tis not neceſſary that the Paſſion we here ſpeak of ſhould be *Luſt*, becauſe then 'twould be a ſin to be in *Love*, and conſequently, there would be a neceſſity of ſinning in order to *Marriage*, becauſe no man is ſuppoſed to marry but whom he *thus* Loves.

5. And now to your 2d Enquiry, whether Muſic be a Senſual or Intellectual pleaſure, before this can be determin'd, the Idea of a Senſual and Intellectual pleaſure muſt be ſtated.

6. And 1ſt I obſerve that the preciſe *difference* of a ſenſual pleaſure cannot conſiſt in this, that the Body be pleaſed or gratefully affected, nor of an Intellectual that the Mind be pleaſed. For by reaſon of the ſtrict union of Soul and Body, one ſo ſympathizes with the other, that theſe pleaſures are always *Mutual* and complicated. So that there is no pleaſure of mind that does not alſo recreate the Body, and no pleaſure of Body but whereof the Mind has its ſhare.

ſhare. And thus far there is agreement and reciprocation. That then which is *peculiar* and *diſcriminative* muſt be taken from the *Primaryneſs* or *Secondaryneſs* of the Perception. That Pleaſure therefore is an Intellectual Pleaſure when the Soul is primarily and immediatly affected, and the Body only ſecondarily and by participation. And that is a ſenſual pleaſure when the Body is primarily and immediatly affected, and the Soul only ſecondarily and by participation.

7. Now according to this Meaſure we muſt of neceſſity define the pleaſure of hearing Muſic to be properly *Intellectual*. Becauſe the Soul is the part that is then primarily and immediatly affected, and the Body only by reſult. And that for this evident Reaſon, becauſe Muſic conſiſting *formally* in Proportion, and Proportion pleaſing only as *underſtood*, that part muſt be primarily and directly pleaſed which is capable of underſtandiug. But this is not the Body but the Soul. 'Tis true indeed the ear may be directly pleaſed by a *ſingle* ſound, as the eye is recreated by a ſingle Colour (ſuppoſe *green*) and this I grant to be a pleaſure of ſenſe as much as ſmelling or taſting, tho not ſo groſs. But the Ear may no more properly be ſaid to be pleaſed with the *Proportion* of ſounds, or with ſounds as *proportionate*, than the eye is with a *Picture*.

8. If it be here objected, that Muſic is a plea-

ſure

ſure of Senſe becauſe 'tis *convey'd* by the *Ear*, I reply that if this be ſufficient to make a Pleaſure Senſual, the moſt Intellectual pleaſures we are here capable of may be call'd Senſual, as reading fine diſcourſes, contemplating the Beauty of the Creation, attending to Mathematical Diagrams and the like, becauſe all theſe as well as Muſic are enjoy'd by the *Mediation* of the Senſes.

9. But it matters not tho the Senſes be the *Inſtruments of conveyance*, ſo the Soul be the part *directly* and *primarily* affected, which is the caſe here. For tho the Ear may be pleaſed with thoſe ſingle ſounds which with relation to each other are really Harmonical, yet it is not, it cannot be pleaſed with them as ſuch, or in that *Formality*. This is the ſole Priviledge of the *Mind*, which as it can only *judge* of, ſo is it only capable of being *pleas'd* with *Harmony*.

10. And thus Sir you have my ſentiments with as much Brevity and Clearneſs as I could uſe, and it may be, as the Matters would bear. I have now nothing further to add, but to renew the aſſurances of my being

Your Friend and Servant

J. N.

A Letter concerning Friendſhip.

SIR,

1. TO your Queſtion whether in propriety of ſpeaking there may be *ſtrict Friendſhip* between a *man* and his *wife*, I anſwer firſt that the ſolution of this Queſtion depends upon another, *(viz.)* what are the Requiſites eſſentially neceſſary to the *Exerciſe* of Friendſhip, and this Queſtion likewiſe depends upon another, (*viz.*) what is the true *Notion* or *Idea* of Friendſhip. This being rightly ſtated, 'twill be eaſy to diſcern what are the eſſential *Requiſites*, and conſequently whether Man and Wife are capable *Terms* in this Relation or no.

2. Now as to the *Idea of Friendſhip*, I anſwer firſt in general, that Friendſhip is nothing elſe but *Benevolence* or *Charity* under ſome certain *Modifications* or accidental circumſtances. *Accidental* I mean as to *Charity*, tho *neceſſary* and *eſſential* to *Friendſhip*. And thus far I think all Moraliſts are agreed. But now what theſe certain Modifications are, here they begin to be divided. 'Twould be too tedious a work to inſiſt here upon the variety of other mens Opinions, and therefore I ſhall only briefly deliver my own, which is, that all the Modifications of *Charity* neceſſary to the conſtitution of *Friend-*

Friendſhip may be well enough reduced to theſe three. 1. That it be in a ſpecial manner *intenſe*, 2ly, that it be *mutual*, and 3ly that it be *manifeſt* or *mutually known*. Charity when cloth-ed with theſe three Modifications immediatly commences *Friendſhip*. More than theſe it need not have, but of theſe not one may be ſpared, as will eaſily appear if you examine them ſeverally.

3. Now from this *Idea* of Friendſhip 'tis very obvious to deduce what are the *Requiſites* neceſſary to Friendſhip, not in reference to its *Idea* (for that's already ſtated) but in reference to its *Exiſtence* or *actual Exerciſe*, that is in one word, what are thoſe *Diſpoſitions* or *Aptneſſes* in the *Subject* whether as to perſon, ſtate or condition, which may render it capable of Friendſhip according to the forementiond *Idea*. Now I ſay what theſe are may be eaſily collected from the *Idea* it ſelf, as will appear if we conſider it diſtinctly according to thoſe three Modifications, and by applying the genus to each of them. For 1ſt whereas Friendſhip is ſaid to be Charity in a ſpecial manner intenſe, hence I collect 1ſt, that it cannot be but between good men, becauſe an ill man cannot have any true Charity, much leſs ſuch an intenſe degree of it as is requiſite to Friendſhip. So that *Vertue in general* is one Requiſite. 2ly, hence I collect that a Friend muſt not be only according to the Character *Lucan* gives of *Cato* --- *rigidi ſervator*

vater honesti, *rigidly vertuous* and honest, but he must be also χρηστὸς ἀνὴρ, a man of a *liberal*, sweet, obliging temper, one of those *good* men of whom 'tis said in Scripture (by way of contradistinction to the *Righteous* or rigidly honest) that some would even dare to *dye* for them. For tho I may have *common* Charity, nay more, a great *Esteem* for a man of plain honesty and integrity, yet I can never love him with that *special intensenes's* of Affection which belongs to *Friendship*, unless he be also of a beneficent, kind and obsequious temper. So that *good nature* is another requisite. 3ly, hence I collect that there must be also (at least in a competent proportion) an *agreeableness of humours* and *manners*, for unless the materials be of an apt and correspondent *figure*, the building can neither be *compact* nor *lasting*, so that *likeness of disposition* is another Requisite. 4. hence I collect that true Friendship cannot be among *many*. For since our faculties are of a *finite* energy, 'tis impossible our love can be very intense when divided among many. No, the rays must be *contracted* to make them *burn*. So that another Requisite is, that the Terms of this Relation be *few in Number*.

4. These are all the Requisites that I can think of at present deducible from the first part of the *Idea* (*viz.* Charity in a special manner intense) As for fidelity in retaining secrets, constancy of Adherence and the like, I think they

are

are vertually included in the firſt Requiſite, it being hardly conceivable how a man can be good and vertuous that wants them. But if you think the Reduction not ſo obvious, you may if you pleaſe add them here in the fifth place as diſtinct Requiſites, 'twill be all one. Thus far of the Requiſites deducible from the firſt part.

5. To proceed. Whereas it is further ſaid that Friendſhip is a Benevolence that's *Mutual*, there is but one general Requiſite deducible from this, which is, that all the other be found in both (or if more) in all the perſons ſuppoſed to be Friends. The third of which importing *Relation* will of neceſſity be ſo, for all *Similitude* is *mutual*. Laſtly, whereas 'tis ſaid that Friendſhip is a Benevolence *mutually known*, all that will be Requiſite upon this head is, that the Perſons who are to be confederated in this union, have ſuch opportunities of Converſe or Correſpondence, that they may be ſatisfy'd of the *Degree* and *Reality* of each others love.

6. Having thus ſtated the *Idea of Friendſhip*, and from thence deduced all the neceſſary qualifications in the ſubject for its *entertainment*, I think I may now from the Premiſes venture to affirm that there may be *ſtrict Friendſhip* between *Man and Wife*. For which of theſe Requiſites is it that they muſt *neceſſarily* want? As for your Objection taken from their *inequality*, I grant Equality is wanting both as to *Sex*

and as to *Conjugal Relation*, but neither is *all* Equality *neceſſary*. 'Tis not abſolutely neceſſary that Friends ſhould ſtand upon a *Level*, either in reſpect of Fortune, State or Condition. This ſort of Equality I grant is a *good Preparative* for a more eaſy *Introduction* of Friendſhip, and 'tis alſo advantagious to the *laſtingneſs* of it, but yet 'tis diſpenſable. 'Tis like levelling the ground betwixt two rivers, it makes way for a more *eaſy* union, but yet 'tis poſſible from *Earthquakes*, *Floods* or other contingencies they may be united without it. The only equality that is neceſſary is an equality of *diſpoſitions*, an harmony of *affections*, but this may be in perſons of *unequal fortunes* and conditions. I confeſs, there can be no ſuch thing as Friendſhip between perſons of different quality if the Superiour takes *advantage* of his *preheminence* or Authority, for then 'tis true what the Poet ſays, *Si vis Sexte coli, non amabo.*

7. But then 'tis not the being *inveſted* with ſuperiority that is inconſiſtent with Friendſhip (for then Kings who have no equals but thoſe of *other Kingdoms* with whom they cannot intimately converſe, would be the miſerableſt Creatures alive) but the *habitual uſe* and *exerciſe* of it, and the ſtanding upon its *priviledges*.

8. But there is no neceſſity that it ſhould be ſo. *Friendſhip* may *level* thoſe whom *Fortune* has made *unequal*, and the greateſt *Monarch* in the world may find Opportunities to deſcend from

from the throne of majeſty to the familiar Careſſes of a *dear Favorite*, and *unking* himſelf a while for the more glorious title of *Friend*. 'Tis but to apply this to the particular caſe in hand, and you have a Solution to your Queſtion. And now Sir from the *Theory* of Friendſhip I ſhall moſt readily deſcend to the *Practiſe* of it when ever you pleaſe to employ the ſervice of

(Dear Sir)

Your moſt real Friend and Servant

J. Norris.

The Copy of a Letter written to my Friend F. B. *concerning the death of my dear Neece* M. C.

My dear Friend,

1. SInce 'tis one of the happineſſes of Friendſhip to Communicate *ſorrow* as well as to ſhare in *joy*, that the one may be *increas'd* and the other *diminiſh'd*, I cannot but betake my ſelf to this eaſy refuge, being at preſent in ſuch a condition, as will need more relief and ſupport than I can either *give* to *my ſelf*, or *receive* from *others*.

2. The truth is, ſhould I indulge my paſſion, I might find perhaps as much cauſe as he that did it, to curſe the day of my *Nativity*. My pretty little dear *Neece* and *Scholar*, ſhe whom I loved, admired and delighted in, ſhe for whoſe ſake I once thought *life*, as now I think *death* a *Bleſſing*, ſhe (how ſhall I bring out that diſmal word) —— is dead.

3. She is, and has left a ſtrange emptineſs in my Soul (ſo large was the room ſhe took up there) which nothing of this world's good can ever fill. I muſt needs own that I never was ſo deeply affected with any trouble in my life, nor did I ever think that it could be in the power of any *temporal* loſs ſo much to diſcompoſe and *unſpirit* my Soul. It is not a tranſient *guſt* of paſſion, which like a little cloud would either ſoon

blow

blow over, or *ſpend* it ſelf in a *momentary ſhower*, but 'tis with my *mind* as with the *face* of the *ſky* when 'tis all *ſet* to rain. Were it only an affection of the *ſenſitive* and *Animal* part, it would ſoon vaniſh like the *phantaſtic colours* of the *Rain-bow*, but my grief is of a more malignant kind, and penetrates even into the very *Center* of my Soul. 'Tis lodg'd (as *Lipſius* I remember emphatically phraſes it) *in ipſa animi mente*, 'tis an *ingrain'd*, *rational* and *Judicious* ſorrow.

4. I lament not on *her* account (for I cannot, without reflecting upon the *divine goodneſs*, queſtion the happy ſtate of one who was nothing but *innocence* and *ſweetneſs*) but purely upon my *own*. And that I do in ſuch a meaſure that --- but 'tis in vain to go about to expreſs it, for I lov'd her as I lov'd my own Soul, and however my *ſorrow* may be blam'd for her *now*, yet I'm ſure my *love* for her *could not*.

5. For ſhe was a perſon (and you know I am not *over-prone* to *admire*) ſo *peculiarly* accompliſh'd, as if Nature had deſign'd nothing elſe in her compoſition but to make one *on purpoſe* to be *belov'd*. As for her outward form, ſhe was one of the *ſtudied* and *elaborate* pieces of Nature, and by the very air of her Countenance was *markt out* for an *extraordinary Soul* to inhabit in. Nor was the *Jewel* unworthy of the *caſe*, for certainly ſhe had as excellent a Spirit (one only excepted) as ever condeſcended to wear human fleſh. Her parts were miraculous

and

and extraordinary, ſo extraordinary, that had not the *youth* and *verdancy* of her face *contradicted* the *ripeneſs* of her *diſcourſings*, you would have thought her *well in years*.

6. And tho *Art* had little more to do where *Nature* had been ſo *eminently liberal*, yet ſo *Covetuous* was ſhe as well as *Capable* of improvement, as if ſhe meant to graſp all manner of knowledge, and leave nothing to a future ſtate to add to her accompliſh'd Soul. And indeed 'tis too incredible to be related, conſidering the ſhortneſs of the time (for her pulſe had not beat thirteen years) what a wondrous progreſs her active Soul had made. Thus far only I ſhall venture in general, that had ſhe lived to be as ripe in *years* as ſhe was in *parts* and *ingenious attainments*, ſhe would have been the *envy* of her *Sex*, and the *wonder* of *Mankind*.

7. But yet the *former* of theſe would have been much abated by her admirable *ſweetneſs* and *good nature*. A Quality as of it ſelf *moſt excellent*, ſo that wherein ſhe *moſt excell'd*. And here I muſt beg leave of all that I ever convers'd with to declare, that I never obſerv'd in any, ſuch a free, generous, obliging and diſintereſs'd temper, which mightily *ſweetned* and *recommended* her *parts*, and made her not only *admirable*, but *lovely*.

8. And beſides all this there were in her (as in *Poetry*) many *errantes abditæque veneres*, wandring and hidden graces that want a name, and

unex-

unexpreſſible Prettineſſes, which yet were ſtrangely moving, and of a charming influence. I am not conſcious to my ſelf of any partial fondneſs, or Rhetorical affectation in any one part of this Character, but as near as I can do ſpeak the genuin, unprejudiced ſenſe of my Soul. I hate to flatter the *living*, much more the *dead*, whoſe *names* are as ſacred to me as their *ſepulchers*. My only fault here (if any) is in the *defect*, for ſhe was as much too good to be *ſufficiently commended*, as to be *long enjoy'd*.

9. And now (ſetting aſide that particular reſpect which ſhe ever bleſt and honour'd me with) how can I chuſe but be very paſſionately concern'd for the loſs of ſuch a rare and every way accompliſh'd perſon! I cannot, and methinks when I ſurvey the *ſuddain ruin* of my *pleaſant*, but *ſhortliv'd gourd*, I can hardly forbear juſtifying my *grief* as the *inraged Prophet* did his *Anger*, and like him am *tempted* to ſay, *I do well to be ſorrowful*.

10. But I muſt not be ſo *ill a Pilot* as now the floods of Paſſion ariſe to throw away my *tackling*, commit my Veſſel to the winds, and run along with the tempeſt; *ſatis naturæ datum eſt, jam & Ratio ſuum aſſerat Principatum*. For my ſhip begins to be cover'd with the waves, and therefore 'tis now high time to awake *Reaſon* from her *dead ſleep*, that ſhe may *rebuke* the *winds* and the *Sea*, that they may be *calm and ſtill*. 'Tis dangerous to indulge any longer, the tumult of the

the Paſſions runs high, and the unruly Faction preſſes hard upon the gate of the Palace, 'tis therefore time for the *Soveraign Faculty* to come forth in her imperial robes, & ſuppreſs the *mutiny*.

11. In order therefore to the quieting of my paſſions, and the reſettlement of my diſcompos'd Soul, I conſider, Firſt, that *grief* is the moſt abſurd and ſenſeleſs of *all the Paſſions*, yea of all the things in the world, and utterly unbecoming a Creature that makes the leaſt pretenſion to *Reaſon*. Becauſe 'tis reſolvable into no rational Principle; for whatever is ſo muſt be, or at leaſt *appear* to be either an *End* or a *Means*. But this can pretend to neither. Not to be *end*, for nothing is ſo but what is *good*, but this is in *no reſpect good*, and in *many reſpects evil*. Not to be a *Means*, becauſe it *effects nothing*, but is altogether *vain and fruitleſs*. And indeed it cannot but be ſo, becauſe 'tis of a thing *paſt*, which even to *Omnipotence* it ſelf is *impoſſible* to be *alter'd*. Our *other Paſſions* are to ſome purpoſe, and aim at ſome end. *Love* to *enjoy*, *Anger* to *revenge*, *Fear* to *avoid*, and the like; But this Paſſion, *grief*, ſerves to no end or purpoſe in the world, and it cannot be its *own end* becauſe (as I ſaid before) it is in no reſpect *good*. It is therefore utterly abſurd and unreaſonable.

12. Again I conſider, that ſuppoſe grief were not ſo *vain* and *ineffective* a thing as 'tis, but that it could make ſome *alteration* in things, yet

yet it cannot alter any one event for the *better*, and therefore to what purpoſe ſhould I indulge it? For ſince we acknowledg a Being of an infinite Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs to ſit at the *Helm* of the univerſe, it muſt be conſequently acknowledg'd that the courſe of this world is ſteer'd to the beſt advantage of the *whole*, and however ignorant we may be how to juſtify *particular Phenomena's*, yet we muſt (if we will be conſiſtent with our former conceſſion) at leaſt *implicitly* believe that all things are as well as they can poſſibly be. ● Certain it is (whatever ſome *Male-contents* may think) the world is *govern'd* with as much wiſdom as twas *made*, and as the *natural world* ſtood the teſt of the *divine Criticiſm*, ſo will the *Moral one* too. God upon review would pronounce *this as good* as he did the *other*, and why ſhould not *we*? yea we ſhould, if we could ſee this excellent *Drama* from end to end as *he does*; we ſhould then diſcern that all thoſe diſpenſations which *ſeparately* taken appear harſh and unequal, yet in *Concatenation* and *together* conſpire to the Beauty and Intereſt of the *whole*. *This* will be our portion *hereafter*, in the mean time 'twill be our greateſt wiſdom to truſt *that* of God, and believe that implicitly as to the *thing*, which we cannot diſcern as to the *manner*. And this I take to be the moſt rational foundation of *Reſignation and Acquieſcence* in the divine pleaſure, which is grounded upon a Conſideration of his

infinite

infinite *Wiſdom* and *Goodneſs*. When we reſolve our wills into his merely for this reaſon, becauſe we pay ſo much deference to his perfections, as to think, that if we knew as much as he, we ſhould not wiſh things to be otherwiſe than they are. And this is highly ſpecify'd in the Saints in Heaven, who through that near and intimate view which they have of God's *perfections* are ſo intirely conformable to his *will*, that they can diſpenſe not only with the *eternal loſs* but *damnation* of their *friends* without the leaſt grief or reſentment. I confeſs, this eminency of reſignation is no more attainable in this life than any other part of Celeſtial happineſs, but yet an heedful and attentive meditation of this Argument may do much towards it; And however difficult it be to reduce it to *Practiſe*, yet 'tis moſt certain in the *Theory* that granting the ſuperintendency of an infinite and unprejudic'd underſtanding, and that every calamity is (as *Euripides* ſomwhere calls it) συμφορὰ δαιμόνων ſent from God, to grieve at any misfortune is to grieve that things are as they ſhould be. Which is one would think, too abſurd for him to be guilty of who is defined to be *a Rational Creature*.

13. Again I conſider, that as that which I call an affliction is (as certainly as God is Wiſe and Good) for the beſt in reference to the *whole Syſteme of things*, ſo for all that I know it may be moſt conducive to *my intereſt in particular*.

In

In as much as by it I may either *obtain* a *greater good*, or *avoid* a *greater evil*. Thus a *Shipwreck* made *Zeno* a Philoſopher, and the *Meſſenger of Satan* proved an Antidote to the great Apoſtle againſt *pride* and *vanity* of Spirit. And perhaps there was in me ſome evil and unmortify'd quality or other of ſo malignant a nature that it could not be cured by a leſs ſevere Application. For certainly God is not ſo *ill a Phyſitian* as not to *weigh* the Ingredients of his *bitter Cup*, before he mingles it into a *draught*, that it may be proportionable to the ſtrength of the *diſeaſe* as well as of the *Patient*.

14. Again I conſider, that as this affliction may be one of the *Arrows* of *love*, and in the deſignation of God be intended for *my particular good*, ſo 'tis moſt certain that by wiſe conduct I may extract good out of it if I will, and turn it to my greater advantage. *Plato* I remember ſomwhere compares the life of man to a *game at Tables*. And indeed the compariſon is worthy the wiſdom of its Author, and full of myſtic and important truth. For as *there* what *Caſt* we ſhall have is not in our power, but to manage it well, that is. So is it with man in the concerns of life. 'Twas not in my power whether this Affliction ſhould befall me or not, but 'tis in my power to manage it for my advantage now it has befall'n me. I can uſe it as an Opportunity of ſhewing my Vertue, as an Occaſion of withdrawing my affections from the world

world considering the uncertainty of the *best* objects in it, of increasing my love to God, and his *love* to me *here*, and his *rewards* to me *hereafter*. And to this purpose I consider the story of *Abraham*, who for his readiness to part with his beloved Son at the demand of God, became the *Favorite* and *Friend* of his maker, and obtain'd this emphatical promise from him, *In blessing I will bless thee.*

15. Again I consider, that altho by the loss of this excellent Creature a *great breach* be made upon my *happiness*, yet the remainder of what I *enjoy* is much greater than the evil which I *suffer*, so that upon the *whole* the Scale *weighs down* for *happiness*. My Condition is still better than that of many others, who yet think themselves happy. And therefore for me to pine and lament because I am not *so* happy as I *was*, or *may* be, becomes neither the *Philosophy* of a *Scholar*, nor the *Humility* of a *Christian*, and upon the same Principle I may continue to lament even when I am in *Heaven*. Rather let me adore the bounty of God for filling my Cup *so full*, than be discontented because it does not *run over*.

16. Again I consider with the great Apostle that *the time is short*, and that therefore I should *weep as if I wept not*. 'Twill not be long e're I shall enjoy the Beatific Vision of God and (if after that the fruition of any Creature can be of any moment) the Society of even this dear per-

son.

ſon. In the mean while I have one Artifice more whereby to ſolace my ſelf, and that is, by entertaining the ſame apprehenſion of what I enjoy as I ſhould do if I *did not enjoy it*. I think with my ſelf, how miſerable I ſhould be if I wanted ſeveral of thoſe Bleſſings which I have, particularly if I had not been bred a *Scholar*, and thereby been qualify'd to be my *own Comforter*. And by vertue of this Conſideration I ſet a *higher value* upon what I *enjoy*, and conſequently find the *leſs miſs* of what *I do not*.

17. This is my *Conſolatio Philoſophica*, whereby I allay and *fix* the violent *fermentation* of my Paſſions. To which I might add many *popular* Arguments, as that 'tis as natural to *dye* as to be *born*, that 'tis incident not only to *man* but to the *whole Creation*, *the faſhion of this world paſſes away*, that 'tis *envious* to think *that our loſs* which is *our friend's gain*, that occaſions of grief in this world are *many*, and therefore not *ſingly* to be *much* lamented, that 'tis a *ſhame* for *Reaſon* not to be able to conquer that which muſt at length yield to *time*, and the like. But theſe I ſhall be content only to mention, partly becauſe I don't fancy much to be *Topical*, and partly becauſe I think my *other ſupports* ſtrong enough to bear the *ſtreſs* of the moſt *weighty ſorrow*.

18. And now the reſult of all theſe conſiderations is this. I am fully and intirely ſatisfy'd with the accompliſhment of the divine plea-

ſure, and tho before 'twas my hearty prayer that (if poſſible) *this Cup might paſs from me*, yet I now as chearfully ſubſcribe to the other clauſe, *Nevertheleſs not as I will but as thou wilt.* I am thoroughly convinc'd both of the abſurdity and undecency of my former ſorrow, and tho not ſo much a *Stoic* as to condemn *all the paſſions*, yet I do this of *grief* as freely as any of that rigid School, and therefore will no longer *defile my ſelf for the Dead.* Lev. 21. 1. If any grief can be now reaſonable, it muſt be becauſe I have griev'd ſo much, for I am conſcious that I have thereby exceedingly betrayd the greatneſs of my Soul. *Homer* indeed thought it not unworthy the Character of his great Hero *Achilles* to bring him in paſſionately bewailing the death of *Patrōclus.* His expreſſion (as I remember) is σμερδαλέον δ' ὤμωξεν *he wept hideouſly.* But certainly our Saviour was of another mind, when he ſaid to his Diſciples upon the occaſion of his *own* death (and certainly if *any* thing could *juſtify* ſorrow *that* would) *Let not your hearts be troubled.*

19. But yet after all I muſt needs ſay, tho I have pretty well by this time *argued* my paſſions into a *Calm*, that 'tis a *great venture* to love any thing well in *this world*, and that I am reſolv'd for the ſake of this dear perſon never to ingage my paſſions *very far* in the love of any thing again.

Quicquid amas cupias non platuiſſe nimis

ſhall

ſhall be my *Motto* as long as I live, and I will follow the excellent rule of the *Royal Philoſopher* M. Antoninus, Ἁπλοῦν σεαυτὸν, and reduce my ſelf as near as I can to a *ſimplicity*, and delight in as *few things* as may be. So ſhall I *more undividedly* adhere to my *laſt and beſt end*, and lye *leſs* at the *mercy* of *fortune*.

20. But (Sir) however I *contract* my love, you may aſſure your ſelf of the ſame room you ever had in the affections of

Your true Friend

J. Norris.

FINIS.